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Comic Fandom Monthly

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THE MAGAZINE OF COMIC BOOKS AND RELATED FIELDS JAN NO. 5

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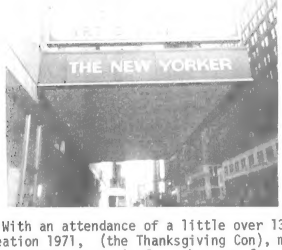
Creation '71 no Turkey!!

BOB PINAHA



With an attendance of a little over 1300, Creation 1971, (the Thanksgiving Con), made it's debut to comic fans who came from all over the country to be there for the two day feast. Hosted by CFM fellow columnist Adam Malin, Creation had a great start being only a half hour late.

Once the doors were open though, fans were invited to browse through the tremendous dealers quarters. This being a smaller con than the annual Seuling Con that I am used to, I was astounded to view the many dealers who showed up. One complaint that was witnessed in the dealer room was the inusually small and cramped aisle space that was evidenced in the seperation of the tables from each other. Fans had to literally *crawl* through the other fans gathered at the dealers tables.

After shuffling about trying to find some bargains, I took a quick peek at the day's scheduled events. Saturday's Program began at 11:30 AM with Jim Steranko delivering the Keynote Speech, and at 1:30 PM was an interview with Barry Alan Richmond of the world famous French Theatre of Terror and Comedy. At 3:30 PM was to have been a Fanzine Editor's Panel, but at the last minute was replaced by the ACBA panel, which for some inexplicable reason, was to have taken place on Sunday at 12:30. Instead, Adam announced that the Fanzine Panel would take place on Sunday at 12:30 PM. And on Sunday, the Fanzine Editor's Panel was dropped completely in favor of movies.

Getting back to Saturday's schedule; the next event was at 5:00PM and was labeled, *The Steranko Hour* while at 6:30 PM was the auction with the film show rounding out the day at eight.

Sunday's schedule ran with the ECslide Show starting off at eleven, more films after that, a *Web of Horror* Panel at 5:00 PM with more movies til the close of the convention. Nonetheless, the schedule for both days was quite impressive even though the events ran late.

Steranko's Keynote speech began with the master artist's own interpretation of the Creation Con, *"...my name is Steranko and I would like to welcome you to Creation--the only convention I've ever been to where the guests outnumber the attendance!... People been telling me where to go for years ; looks like I finally made it."* He then went on to reminise about the Disneyland convention, *"...I suppose most of you heard about the Disneyland Convention; they called it FUNKY FLASHMAN'S REVENGE. That was quite a panel that they had there. I never saw so many guest stars. I mean real biggies... Jack Kirby was there, Alex Toth was there, Carmine Infantino flew out, and they had the Seven Dwarfs too!..."*

Steranko went on and gave his personal views on the inflated prices of dealers when he said, *"And Howard Rogofsky was there. He got the MYRON FASS DEALER OF THE YEAR Award; it was the only time I ever saw Phil Seuling cry. No, actually, Howard told me that he's to do to make a profit this year is sell one book and, at his prices, I believe him! And he told me if he'd sell two more books he'd be able to pay off his car, buy a new house, and divorse his old lady..."*

He went on to comment about publishers, and how he feels artists are being taken advantage of, *"You know, I saw a strange thing on the way up here by the elevatore. There were about a half a dozen artists praying, PRAYING in front of the elevators that somebody named Warren would come thru the doors and give 'em a check..."* Full of reminiscing Steranko went on about the first convention he attended, where *Batman # 1* sold for $25; on to his beliefs that comics now have stayed the same from 1936 to the present; how publishers will not put out new, experimental books. *"They don't want to... They, never will. They can't. They have responsibilities to themselves and to the people who back them and, God only knows, when you start LOSING someone else's money, then you're out looking for another job."* He gave

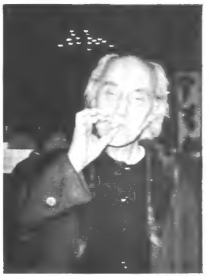
Left to Right: E. Nelson Bridwell, Mike Kaluta (behind Bridwell), Denny O'Neil, Mark Hanerfeld, Mike Kaluta (again), Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, Moderator Chip Storob, Allan Kupperburg, Gerry Conway, Billy Graham (standing), Al Weiss (behind Conway), Berni Wrightson, Larry Ivie, Neal Adams. Taken at ACBA PANEL.

WEB PANEL: Howie Chaykin, Allan Weiss, Marv Wolfman, Bruce Jones Berni Wrightson, Mike Kaluta.

Roy Krenkel, and it's a cigaret!

PHOTOS: BARNOWSKI

Jim Steranko, escape artist, keynote speaker.



'Luke Cage' is "A combination of Superman and Shaft. . "

an example with Bill Gaines and how his sci-fi titles bombed and how he experimented and finally found success with a magazine called *Mad.*

What does Steranko think about the future of comics, *"...I'm looking at it. You people in this room five or ten or twenty years from now will be publishing books yourselves so just remember this, this day when somebody comes to you with an idea and tells you about making money, maybe you can afford to take a chance. Expand the medium that you love. Work on it, make something worthwhile out of it. Thank you."*

The next event was set up as sort of a David Frost interview with His Excellency Barry Alan Richmond, President of the Republic of Momant and her dependencies and the Director-General of the French Grand Gnyol Theatre which is 75 years old and is the largest theatre in the world. *"We specialize in the grotesque, in the absurd, in the macabre, in terror, shock and suspense and also in extremely earthy laughter"* reported his excellency. Unfortunately, the panel put more emphasis on the horror part of the theatre and almost completely ignored the theatre 's comedy.

Their performances are 50% drama and 50% comedy in the set-up of four one act plays which alternate, drama-comedy-intermission-drama-comedy so that they always leave the audience laughing upon their departure.

Some of the more interesting things revealed at this panel were that they dramatize such writers as Twain and Kipling; that their formula for blood is boiled in a cauldron every night, comes in 9 seperate shades and that the formula is known to one man.

Mr. Richmond went on to explain how it is better to do head wounds on a man as it's easier to wash his hair while it is more preferable to do body wounds on a woman as it is cheaper to have all her clothes dry cleaned. Accidents some times do happen as once a man was hung on stage but fortunately he was cut down in time. Some of the stage trickery has been done in movies such as, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari.* Mister Richmond also went on to say how they are negotiating for a possible TV series.

Directly after this panel came the ACBA panel which was originally intended for Sunday's events. This panel was all botched up mainly because all the pros seated up on stage were up there without any purpose and my guess is that they felt uncomfortable up there, at least for the first few minutes of the panel anyway.

Most of the questions were non-intellectual and they were having constant microphone trouble. Add to that the two moderators were on some sort of ego trip and you get one botched up panel. Some of the more interesting parts of the panel are recorded, and presented below:

NEAL ADAMS: *"National has it's attitude what it's going to do and I think probably it has more to do with raising the prices even a bit higher...trying to build a market of 50¢ books, while Marvel feels it can flood the markey with 20¢ books and therefore take over the whole market and they may be right. They are two very large companies and there is a very heavy competition; I hope neither of them wins."*

MARV WOLFMAN: *"Certain books, as Mark Hanerfeld will tell you, will be going new, but not the enitre line; tommorrow, maybe next year."*

"Barry Smith will be doing the Avengers" by his own choice, "and Gil Kane will be doing Conan with inking by Ralph Reese."

To the rumor of **Wrightson doing** *Batman:*

ADAMS: *"There was a plan. The plan was to have me do an introduction and then go into like a dream sequence that Batman's involved in and have Berni do this while I finish it up realistically. I hope we do it real soon."*

On the question of what is done with original art:

MARK HANERFELD: *"I haven't BOUGHT toilet paper in three years..."*

GERRY CONWAY: *"The Iceman strip has been temporarily put aside but we are coming out with a strip called "THE BEAST" which is going to be taking over in Amazing Adventures replacing the Inhumans strip. I wrote the first issue and Steve Englehart...will be writing from now on..."*

CONWAY: *Our big special 50th issue (of Sub-Mariner) is written, drawn, and inked by Bill Everett."*

In answer to why National is changing all their characters, Wolfman gave a very simple answer: *"Desperation".*

CONWAY: *"...Marvel is more interested in giving fantasy stories with relevancy added when National is more interested in doing relevant stories with fantasy added."*

WOLFMAN: *"We're getting too advanced (in our writing.) I'd like to see simpler story-*

CONT

lines..."

Larry Ivie explained the origin of Captain America's round shield as being a move to avoid a lawsuit with another group publishing a costumed hero known as the Mighty Shield, who's costume inspired Cap's original shield. Martin Goodman saw this after publication and ordered a revamping of Cap's shield into the round one of today.

DENNY O'NEIL: *"Wonder Woman will have Jeff Jones covers and Dick Giordano inside art. ...(It will become) a combination of the old I LOVE A MYSTERY radio show and Modesty Blaise and Perils of Pauline...It is not going to be socially relevant...Jonny Double will be her new and fumbling boyfriend and we're going to run a contest for a new Letters Page Title."*

CONWAY: *"Doc Savage will be updated with a costume and will be drawn by John Severin and Rose Andru. Scripts will be adapted from the books, one book every three issues with some occasional new stuff."*

When asked of possible future drug stories: CONWAY: *"There is a Submariner story comin'out in which Submariner meets up with a New Orleans hooker,goes into a New Orleans cathouse and does the whole routine with the pimp there. We felt that that was a little strong so what we did we changed that into something that's cleaner..they're all drug addicts now. The Comics Code accepted that."*

Also revealed at the ACBA panel were upcoming new things from Marvel such as *Creatures on the Loose* featuring a loosely based feature on a 1905 book, *Gulliver of Mars*, by Gil Kane, Bill Everett, and Sam Granger; in January, *Monsters on the Prowl* will feature, 10 new pages of King Kull by Marie and John Severin; in February Marvel's new book, *Luke Cage - Hero for Hire*, by Billy Graham will appear. It is described as *"A combination of Superman and Shaft."* And in January, Marvel's *Doc Savage* will appear.

After the ACBA panel came The Steranko Hour, which I unfortunately missed due to the hunger pangs my friend and I were feeling about now.

After being thoroughly nourished, mein friend and I went up to look at the art exhibit on display which many fans described, as being "bad". Even Berni Wrightson, at the Web Of Horror Panel on Sunday, said of his drawings in the exhibit, *"They're pretty crummy drawings when you come to think about it. That's why they're in Alan Asherman's collection, because if they were good, he wouldn't have them."*

Surely the highlight of the exhibit were the Wrightson originals (which I don't care *what* Wrightson said, were beautiful) and the three original *Star Trek* costumes on display there.

By this time the auction was over and the film show was about to begin. The first film shown was Corben's *Neverwhere* which was fantastically beautiful and should not be passed up if you have the chance to see it. Next, came a terrible film, *The Death of Robin Hood* followed by *This Island Earth* which ran into film difficulties and was shown Sunday. Saturday's schedule ended with a four minute silent *Star Trek* blooper reel.

Sunday began with a beautiful presentation of EC covers and interior art in the form of a slide show followed by two more films, *This Island Earth* (which by this time was working) and *The Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers* (which should have been rated XX!).

There was another auction and then more movies consisting of old *Merrie Melodys* cartoons and the 90 minute presentation of the 1927 *Metropolis* which I enjoyed tremendously.

The Web of Horror panle followed, which revealed things such as the rates were high in the beginning ($15 a page compared to other companies which start at $10.)

Many of the panel were personally sorry to see Web go saying they really enjoyed that book more than any other book. Reasons for its failure were given as such: circulation, the fact that it had a different logo each issue made it hard to find on the stands.

Other things revealed, not pertaining to Web, include the idea by J. Orlando to have every fourth or fifth issue of *House of Mystery* adapt a horror classic, to be drawn by Berni Wrightson, from such writers as Poe and Lovecraft; and Frank Brunner is working on a private project called *Red Man's Odyssey*; also, the February tenth issue of *Esquire* will have artwork by Barry Smith, Wrightson, and Jeff Jones on "Super-heroes of the '70's" in full color.

The con ended late Sunday night with H.G. Welles' screenplay *Things to Come*.

And a good time was had by all!!!

The pressures of hosting a con are great and believe me, it showed upon Adam Malin who tried very hard to keep everything organized, everything on schedule. To him, we give our thanks for a great con. See you there next year.

And as for you, be here next month when I will have a piece I call "Collecting Comics for Profit." Remember, I'm still awaiting your suggestions for future articles. You can write to me, BoB Pinaha, at 24 Patton Drive, Sayreville, New Jersey, 08872.

The In and Out Worlds of Victor Moscoso

Being of a contemplative, philosophical bent, the kind of underground comic creations which appeal to me most are the ones *Zap #2* smilingly blurbs on its cover as "Kosmic Trooths." Thus I can spend rich hours with *The Dying Dolphin--Ancient Secrets, The Kingdom of Heaven is Within you Comics, Kuk Away Comics*, and the Rick Griffin and Victor Moscoso strips spread through several issues of *Zap*. There's always the possibility that much of this kind of material is put-on, that if you take it seriously you are only being duped; but that's part of the game. And since according to the Hindu teachings that is what the whole universe is --a con game practiced by Brahma upon himself--it all becomes a genuine cosmic truth in the very act of being a put-on.

I know nothing of Victor Moscoso, the man whose work I will be dealing with this go-around. His orientations, what he's trying to communicate or thinks he is communicating and what it means to him are all blanks. I have only what is before my eyes--which is--in the end the best. So I'm free to make assumptions--which is fun. And we go from there.

I am assuming Moscoso is a serious artist, that there is meaning to what he has done, that it is not a collage of disparate elements to which the only meaning is "ha-ha, there's no meaning to it at all!" which is a characteristic of some undergrounds stuff. I have to assume this, of course, in order to say anything about his work; but I feel it is a valid assumption, otherwise I wouldn't make it. At the outset, though, I'm forced to admit that the essence of Moscoso's work lies beyond the domain of word and handy-dandy thought categories. This essence transcends our normal mental categorizations; like water it keeps flowing out of grasping hands that would hold onto it, contain it, understand it. It becomes, thereby, *alive*, wiggly, constantly moving,just beyond reach, perpetually bewildering. One has the sense of "there is meaning here, there is meaning here, I *know* there is meaning here," but like a zen koan, only in pictures, that 'meaning" will not be intellectually contained.

So we come to speak of the unspeakable, and laugh at ourselves for making fools of ourselves in trying to do so. But, it's fun; and though rainbows may be only for vision, some of us love to chase them...

Moscoso's work is, by its very nature, a pretty subjective experience. What this kind of art means always lies somewhere between, you and it, for the meaning comes with interaction. It is not something that is rewarding if it is just casually glanced at; then it's simply impenetrable, and you shrug mental shoulders and leave, perceiving nothing therefrom, and quickly forget the puzzlement. This is not to say that the meaning is penetrable if you spend long hours with it either, although you form tentative ideas as to its meaning. Simply that the act of perceiving, in *attempting* to penetrate the meaning, is rewarding in itself. After spending time poring over it, "getting into it," Moscoso's art becomes simply an experience, predominately of a non-verbal nature. A trip, if you will. And as with a concrete poem or a single picture of a woman's face the interactor becomes surprised at how much really lies there (or, perhaps, in our own minds--since that's 50% of the interactive forces at work here) that he normally never perceives.

As with many other underground artists. (Crumb and Griffin pop immediately to mind) there's a sense of playfulness to much of Moscoso's creation--totally different from the screaminess that characterizes much of the underground reportage. Maybe artistic creation broadens vision? At any rate this playfulness indicates a more cosmic vision, a sense of humor that involves not taking oneself too seriously. There's a touch of the laughing mad zen monk to Moscoso's art, and perchance, even a bit of enlightenment-lying-between-the-lines, the planes, the curves.

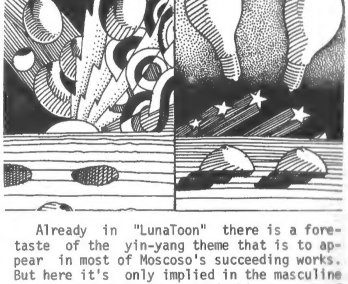
"You must become as a child again to enter the kingdom of heaven" the familiar Biblical quotation informs us. Initially Moscoso's world impresses us as a mad kingdom indeed, and what it could possibly have to do with heaven is moot; but knowing as little about heaven as we do, maybe it's as good a vision as any to begin with. Like the Mohammedan heaven there's a good bit of voluptuous ecstasy present, and it should be pleasing to the good Christian too since there's much that's still beyond mortal understanding. The point of all this is that there *is* a definite child-likeness of vision to Moscoso's work, which ties in, of course, with the playfulness. And note the distinction: it is becoming *as* a child again (as a differentation from being a child), for to fulfill that process one must have an adult

awareness that sees with the wonder and marvellous freshness of a child's eyes once more. The cartoony figures Moscoso plays with (Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Mr. Pea nuts like characters) are straight out of innocent childhood comic books. But Moscoso's mice have breasts, and Hewey, Dewey and Louie have grown balls, and the two worlds merge to fertilize each other.

Moscoso communicates a vision, and the vision exists of itself; one simply perceives it. To try to translate it into words means dealing in broad generalizations that are cliche significant words. Due to their repeated use they tend to communicate little.That is why Moscoso uses few words, of course. The words? Life, Birth, Death, Universe, Change, Light, Dark, Enlightment. And these are the recurrent themes that interweave throughout all of Moscoso's work.

The most recurrent perception is that lines, dimensions, boundaries are not what we normally see them as. Moscoso penetrates and transcends boundaries, transmutes and alters vision. Most of us think in simple linear cause/effect catagories, but reality is not that simple or linear, nor is Moscoso's work. It's mad and unpredictable, as is the reality it comes closer to depicting, thereby, than any number of scientific-charts and table.

One of the meanings I derive from one of Moscoso's most talked-about strips, "Luna Toon," (*Zap #2*) is that the inner and outer world are the same. Skins are boundaries, but what is an outside boundary of what we define as "us" is also an inside boundary of what we've defined as being "outside of us". Inner and outer boundaries are the same, and only *we* have drawn them--for boundaries are the definitions of our thoughts. In "Luna-Toon" we get inner and outer worlds see-saw visioning back and forth. Lips and tunnel-like swirls lead to an inner-consciousness-recess, which contrasts with outer world-type pyramids; and a mouse is on the scene to point out the meaning of it all. Sky lines become birth-of-balls plain (mental layers birthing thoughts) leading to a Mickey Mouse figure (who's been there all along, but is borne anyway) on the plain of the inner consciousness. But shortly afterwards comes the startling shift-vision of the same mouse head idea, only now the nose and eyes are balls on the ground with stars in the heavens and a hole in the wall outlining the figure. Inner growth consciousness world becomes the outside world of walls and stars. The communication is reinforced on the next page with floating light bulbs (symbols of inner ideas) which have breast-like tips at one point (inner birthing) paralleling the stone-like breasts on the outer world birthing plain (which births part of the mouse figure again, who, in turn, births the lightbulb-thought). The feminine birth imagery is implied, previous to the breast stones on the plain panel, by an alternate stacking of three stones, first as midsection and two spread legs (open to impregnation by shooting stars) and then as midsection and two breasts stacked against the sky followed by a sizzle-change lightning stroke and world-convergence alteration. In the concluding panels our mouse character is joined by a duck character with each of their hands approaching each other, implying separations, boundaries, closing; and in the very last panel a thought balloon and mouse-stone figure are a part of outer vision and seems to be meditating upon the profoundness of it all.



Already in "LunaToon" there is a foretaste of the yin-yang theme that is to appear in most of Moscoso's succeeding works. But here it's only implied in the masculine mouse and feminine breast/birthing aspect of the strip. (This is the main theme of the Mr. Peanut one-pager in this same issue of *Zap*. A male Mr. Peanut transmutes into a white female who becomes black. So the full yin-yang, dark-light, seed of each in each, is present. In the second to last panel the elements begin dispersing--this dispersal, with the implication of later-joining to a new kind of birth is also common to many of Moscoso's strips. In the last panel we have a child. Transmutation and birth. Boundaries that seperate also join.

The yin-yang symbol is actually used in *Zap #3*, and it fits perfectly, reinforcing, the "69" center spread in this special "69 issue." (Interestingly enough, the way Moscoso places his planes, the yin-yang symbol casts a heart shadow.) Yin-yang and 69

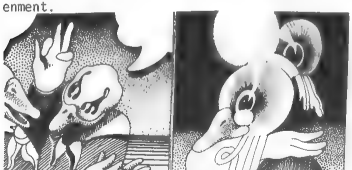
amount to the same theme, a theme which is expressed in yet another manner in "Topsy-Turvy" (*Zap #4*) where the ceiling simultaneously functions as the floor (from one perspective) while the floor is also simultaneously functioning as the ceiling (from a flipped-over perspective). This gives a yin-yang/69 frame effect to the various sexual couplings. A similar playfulness is what is so delightful about the stairway chase scene in *Cosmic Comics*. The hero is going up the stairs, fleeing the villain, saying "Maybe it is a dream" while the villain (when you flip the page 180°) is also going up the stairs looking for the hero. They pass each other in ceiling/floor different dimensions. This may seem like nothing more than amusing cartoony foolishness, with no real relevance to what we call the "real world," but such is not the case. In its own manner it's pointing out the relativity of perspective. What is "up" to one person, from where he is standing, is "down" to another from where *he* is standing. This immediately relates to perspectives of "right" and "wrong", and therefrom to most of the religious, political, philosophical and interpersonal conflicts that exist in this world.

Moscoso's most complex dealing with boundaries and planes is the "Camel" strip in *Zap #3*. The principle he uses for his effects is basically that of the box drawn with twelve lines--two offset squares connected, conveying the image of a three-dimensional cube. If you stare at it long enough it shifts perspective and what was the inside back wall becomes the outside front wall and vice-versa. In "Camel" the plain floor for the top progression of drawings is also a ceiling for the bottom set, and what have to be outside walls because of the windows in them also have to be inside walls because of the interior shadows cast upon them. Very confusing, and your vision keeps shifting back and forth trying to understand. Again it's the theme of the inner is simultaneously the outer, the up is the down, the yin has the seed of yang and they are one. An electric fixture serves as the connective between an inner-world walled--and an outer world of the heavens and the ages (which also have walls, from another perspective, just as Moscoso does with his spaceships and the seemingly "limitless heavens" in *Cosmic Comix*). Similar to the Mr. Peanut strip, an old man becomes younger, becomes female, and the female progressively becomes more and more lushly sensuous, with, finally, yin-yang symbols for eyes. Meanwhile and simultaneously on the plain level, ancient pyramids are transformed to a futuristic city and the worlds in the heavens come down to this world, ready to pass through windows where beings ignore themselves, look upon themselves and are looked upon by themselves. Heavenly balls cascade upon the plane barriers, finally battling their way into the layers of an inner world while male mouse figures come in through the window, over the wall, to join the female figure in the walled-room in yin-yang joining.

There is a strong birthing theme to all these transformations, and what is essentially an optomistic, pro-life orientation. Up to this point Moscoso's work proclaims a joyous "yes!" that ends in fertile celebration (as opposed to negativistic, doom-laden what's-the-use-of-it-all pessimism). The initial panels of age, desert, death, and trapped aloneness become joyous and alive joining and fecundity. Pointed rock-like pyramids stacked on shoes become bouncy rolling balls that sprout arms and legs. It's just a case of the camel humps getting together! (In the first panel the camel figure is shown with a single penis-head-like hump; in the second with two breast-like humps. Yin-yang meanings, of course, but here they are seperated by the panel lines; later the dimensions of the lines are transcended and the actual symbol makes its climactic appearence.) Artistically balancing in initi-

al camel humps in the first two panels is the playful mouse figure on the last page which has a definite nipple indication in the shaded area of the yin-yang symbol which composes his body, and a hairy testicular nose. Touches like this could easily be missed in a casual viewing of Moscoso's work, especially since they're seperated by intervening pages. But it's elements of this nature which indicate that Moscoso's strips, like a great painting, have to be viewed not just as a progression, leading from beginning to end, but as a balanced artistic whole. These are not linear strips, and actually a Moscoso strip is much more closely related to a Dylan Thomas poem or a Beethoven symphony than to a Marvel comic strip.

Moscoso's works are works of mystical vision rather than stories with plots. This mysticism is obvious in the yin-yang, transmutation, and boundaries-are-not-real themes I've pointed out. It manifests itself in another familiar manner in the titleless strip on pg. 37 of *Zap #2*. Here Moscoso uses duck-like figures apparently communicating metaphysical perceptions to each other. (There are word balloons, but no words in them.) In the second panel we get a duckish head-of-Yorick, adding to the sense of the importance of what is being seen, for now the dead and alive speak as one. Then in the background, growing in our vision, is the One, and as the strip progresses the Many become that One, after which the One sends out a thought which becomes the individual duck again, standing upon the rock of the All, and, in the last panel the thought balloon has shimmery edges indicating enlightenment.



Through *Zap #4* Moscoso's strips are continuously mystifying with their unexpected and fecund transformations, but they are characterized by affirmative, meditative and joyous qualities. *With Zap #5* more disquieting elements enter his work, a sense of frenzy, of apocalyptic warning. The very textures and lines themselves in "Krazy Komics" are jarring, jagged, starkly threatening (as opposed to the calm, innocent curves of strips like "Camel", "Luna Toon" and "Topsy-Turvy"). On the first page of "Krazy Komix" an Indian character perceives a threatening giant, coming closer. But the giant is himself. This is followed by car and airport violence visions (both of which are masculine sex-substitutes; this meaning becomes obvious with the panels depicting a blood-spurt ejaculation after a car wreck, a man's head as the frontal part of a car, and the double meaning dialog from the airplane, "Wheels caught in the corn!"). Women are left to copulate with themselves, with old men and with machines in the guise of men. The last page comments upon the whole disjointed vision: a well dressed white hunter fucks a house- leaving it bleeding, probably dying. Man has fucked his home in insane preference to fruitful relationship with his complement, the female principle. And yes, indeed, he has become a frightening giant.

In the latest work I've seen by Moscoso, the all color *Cosmic Comics*, the sense of threat is continued. A spidery villian appears unexpectedly and gives chase; the apple of Eve leads to the characters "noseing" too much, and therefrom everything blows apart. The outer-inner boundaries theme is present again in another form: a spaceship amongst the stars becomes a fish in an aquarium, and another spaceship is alter-vision-seen as a sleek robot penis. A dove of peace is later supplanted by white birds with long beaks which are explosive missles. They leave a cratered world where life has merged too deeply with non-life/different life(?)mechanisms, and been destroyed in the process. Yet it's all a cosmic cycle, for a machine spaceship sends out a sperm warhead to a hairy world which it impregnates. So it's another form of yin-yang, flesh-life and robot-metallic-life (which has a drive and direction too). Cycles, circularity,and the circle contains the two disparate,(each with the seed of the other in them) elements. A more disturbing yin-yang vision, however.

So, Moscoso. His worlds have their own laws--maybe. Or so a commentator tries to perceive--to commentate. Mankind has spent thousands of years pigeon-holing the laws of his universe--and it still surprises him with violence, with fear, with delight, with change. Maybe all we can say in conclusion is that Moscoso is an aspect of the universe who also surprises, with delight, with disquietude, with confusion, with moments of calm contemplation. With birth, with skulls, with stars. With pyramids of rock and dusty death, and with a squishy slipperiness that defies definitions, but is pain and ecstacy-sensitive to what it tries to define.

THE NEDOR HEROES

BY ART MILLER

It is Christmas 1942 and the publishers of Nedor Comics decide to give their readers a beautiful Christmas present. *Startling Comics #18* introduces their new super-hero, Pyroman, to the comic fans of 1942.

In the first story, Dick Martin is a young science student majoring in electrical engineering. Dick studies for many, hard hours long after the other students have left Central Technical School. Mister Clark, Dick's teacher, is so impressed with Dick's knowledge of dynamos that he makes him his assistant.

After leaving the school one day, Dick decides to visit his pals at the local pool hall where they are hanging around waiting for their draft numbers to be called. Dick urges them to do some work to help the war effort, but they aren't interested. Then a strange character looking like the Shadow with long, purple cape and floppy-brimmed gray hat enters the pool hall. "Dizasta" is his name and easy money is his game. This sinister looking character who claims that he is a real-estate operator whose business is bad, wants to hire Dick and friends to help him collect some insurance money. Dick warns them that there is usually a "catch" to easy money. A struggle ensues, and one of Dizasta's men throw Dick through, and out the pool hall window. At this point, Dick decides to leave!

After he is gone, the kids agree to help Dizasta by setting fire to some buildings on the east side of town, but the cunning Dizasta has other plans. While hero Dick 's friends are creating a diversion, Dizasta's "super-sonic" transmitter is directing some 25,000 vibrations a second against an army munitions factory on the west side of town. Millions of dollars in army supplies are doomed by Dizasta's bizzare machine.

Late one evening after working on his dynamo experiment, Dick is walking home. As he passes the Sterling Foundary, three men burst out the back door followed by bright, orange flames! The factory is afire. As the masked men run past, Dick trips one and he loses his blackjack. Upon examining it, he discovers it to be a sawed-off pool cue. Dick returns to the pool hall and finds the place deserted. While waiting for his pals to show up, Dick finds the other half of the sawed-off cuestick and figures out (finally) that the guys who started the fire must have been his friends. Suddenly, the boys arrive and notice Dick holding the cue-half. After he is again thrown out of the pool hall, his *former* friends figure Dick Martin knows too much. They decide to cause an "accident" to the young science student.

The following night, Dick and Mr. Clark are ready to test the new dynamo. As he throws the switch, there is a blinding flash and 5,000 volts course through Dick's body. Mr. Clark, wearing insulated gloves, quickly saves Dick by pulling him away from the hot, sizzling switch. The teacher can't understand what caused the switch to breakdown . But the stunned Dick Martin understands! He hurriedly leaves the school in search of his former friends. Dick overhears his old pals planning their next job and secretly follows them to a deserted factory. When he sees that they are about to set fire to the old building, he quickly calls the police. The factory is already on fire as the police arrive. The gang decides to shoot-it-out with the police and one officer is killed. As the gang gets away, the police, thinking Dick is part of the gang, arrest him for murder. At the trial the evidence is heavily incriminating against the young student. Dick Martin is found guilty of first degree murder, and is sentenced to the electric chair.

While Dick is waiting in jail for his sentence to be carried out, his former pals learn from Dizasta that their arson jobs were just a diversion for Dizasta's sabotage. The boys are shocked. Arson for insurance money is one thing--sabotage is another! Angry at being tricked by the cunning Dizasta, the boys declare they are going to the F.B.I. Dizasta pulls the final surprise--he and his men shoot all of Dick's former friends.

Meanwhile, Dick's time has come. He is strapped into the electric chair, the switch is thrown, but he does not die! The electrical current is absorbed into his previously charged body. He is now endowed with huge electrical power! Crashing through a steel door, with prison guard's bullets bouncing off of him, Dick Martin escapes from prison. His one desire is to clear his name.

Dick makes his way home and he digs up an old masquerade outfit. He will wear this disguise until he can get one of the gang to confess. The costume is made up of tight, red shirt and pants, with a yellow belt and red boots. A grey hood covers his head and eyes. There are two red lightning bolts on top of the hood to finish off the costume.

Dressed in his new costume, Dick speeds back to (you guessed it!) the pool hall. He finds the boys dead except for Joe. Joe does tell Dick about Dizasta and where he is hiding out. Before Joe dies, he confesses to Dick and Mister Clark (who had just arrived on the scene) that he killed the policeman.

Young Dick Martin is free! *But* there is unfinished business. Dick hurries over to Dizasta's hide-out in his new guise of the Pyroman, and uses his vast electrical power, to capture the gunmen. During the fight, the evil Dizasta escapes and swears that he will have "a deadlier way of stopping Pyroman the next time!" Pyroman than pledges "I vow to hunt America's enemies day and night until justice reigns again!" Thus was the beginning of Pyroman.

The stories that followed were concerned with the Second World War. In these stories, Pyroman "did his thing" by protecting the United States against German and Japan's saboteurs. In his alter-ego of Dick Martin, he remains at the technical school helping Mr. Clark develop strange gadgets and secret weapons to help defeat America's foes.

A romantic interest develops between Mr. Clark's long, blond-haired daughter, Joyce, and Dick Martin. She helps Pyroman on many of his adventures but does not discover his secret identity.

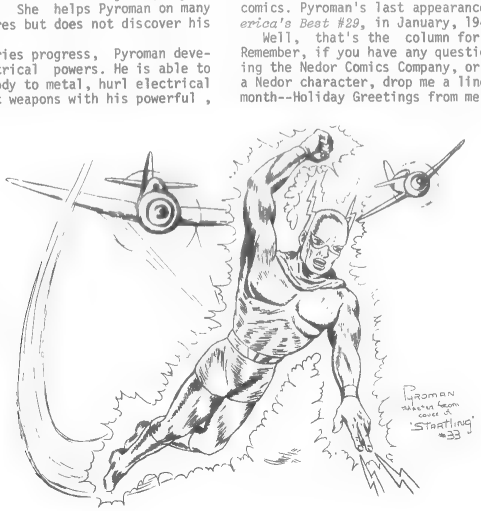
As the stories progress, Pyroman developes his electrical powers. He is able to magnetize his body to metal, hurl electrical bolts, and melt weapons with his powerful electrical charges. Truly a formidable super hero!

The artists and writers of Pyroman are not all known. Ed Hamilton wrote some of the stories and the great Alex Schomburg drew many of the stories. In some of the last Pyroman stories, Mort Meskin did the art.

There were several oddities in the costume of Pyroman. In the origin issue, the splash page has the grey hood covering his whole face while the rest of the story and future stories have it covering just the eyes. The hood is sometimes purple or dark blue. On some of the earlier covers, the eyes are blacked out, but as Schomburg began to draw Pyroman, the eyes were drawn in. The interior art varied too, with Pyroman sometimes having grey boots and briefs. Another oddity appeared in *Startling #27*. Pyroman is shown on the cover fighting a Nazi submarine crew, but there was no story inside the comic!

Pyroman appeared in a total of 43 stories in *Startling Comics* and *America's Best*. After the war, he fought gangsters, mad scientists, counterfeiters, but in the late 40's, the super-hero strips were dying. The readers turned to horror, crime, and western comics. Pyroman's last appearance was in *America's Best #29*, in January, 1949.

Well, that's the column for this month! Remember, if you have any questions concerning the Nedor Comics Company, or requests on a Nedor character, drop me a line. 'Til next month--Holiday Greetings from me & Pyroman!



Spiro, Mickey, Rocky and Bullwinkle!!!!

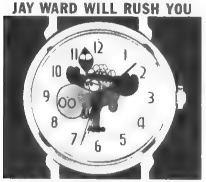
Ever since Mickey Mouse made his debut on a $10 Timex, comic watches have been in and out of vogue in American society. Well, it's in style again and American businessmen are milking it for every penny it's worth. For now, those unpretentious little time pieces are a major industry.

The latest comic watch crave was started by the Dirty Time Company in 1969 with it's *Spiro's Our Hero* watch. It retailed for $20, and became an instant success. It catapaulted in to the society pages when Ethel Kennedy began to wear one. Since then Dirty time has become a multi-million dollar industry. The Spiro watch built Dirty Time, and Dirty Time built a market.

Quite soon imitations flooded the market. It's hard to copyright a vice-president (although it wouldn't be a bad idea, though). The Disney folks, realizing the rejuvenated market, re-introduced the Mickey Mouse watches that we know and love. Included were Mr Mickey, Donald Duck, Pinocchio, Pluto, Jiminy Cricket and Tinkerbelle. In the meantime, Dirty Time Company did not stand still. In quick order they followed with Dickey Nixon W.C. Fields, Spiro Sport, Laurel and Hardy and just recently, The John "Mug-wump" Lindsay watch. As sales continued to boom so did those wanting to jump on the bandwagon.

Jay Ward Productions had been having a bit of success with their cartoon characters such as Bullwinkle and Dudley Doright. They were going well on TV, and Charlton had just leased the comic rights. So, what else was left? Watches, of course! And they made the plunge. They led with their best character, Bullwinkle Moose, and followed quickly with Rocky, his sidekick. Actually, back in the early sixties, Rocky, the Flying Squirrel, was the star, but Bullwinkle eventually got his own sunday night show. That may or may not say something about America's sense of priorities.

Spurred by what one Jay Ward representative said was "utterly fantastic" sales, the Ward group countered with Natasha and Boris Badenov, the premier villians of the Rocky-Bullwinkle team. They are type-cast Russian spys, but I've always kinda dug them. Boris Badenov. How perfectly punny! In any event, the company then added their other characters, notably Dudley Doright of the Royal Mounties, Super-Chicken, and George of the Jungle. Add them to another rendition of the late W.C. Fields, and Buster Keaton, and Jay



ABOVE: Jay Ward Advertisement for the Bullwinkle watches.
BELOW: Dirty Time Company advertisement for their 6 watch styles.

ORIGINAL SPIRO

DICKEY NIXON

SPIRO SPORT

LAUREL & HARDY

LINDSAY

W. C. FIELDS

COMIC WATCHES--IN AND OUT OF VOGUE IN AMERICA

Ward had a rather hefty, 13 character line of watches. They retail for $15 and if you buy two, Jay Ward promises a "free framed color scene from one of Jay Ward's animated TV cartoons!" To each his own, I suppose.

The rage has not stopped there, however. Wolverine World Wide, parent company of Hush Puppies brand casual recently introduced a Hush Puppies watch. The timepiece retails at twelve dollars, and it's selling point's a moving eyeball. Sales have been tremendous according to a WWW spokesman. He points out that the bulk of sales were in shoe stores, and that much of the success must be attributed to the fact that approximately 97% of the country recognizes the Hush Puppies trademark. That's better than Superman.

In addition to a third W.C. Fields rendition, one company also markets a Jesus Christ watch. It's available in black or white skin tones. Also available for $15 from Photo Poster Company is an ingenious little watch that carries the picture of you or your loved one. Or for that matter your enemy. And for the baseball fans amongst us, $10.95 will get you a super-star watch. The O.S.&H. Company offers a timepiece with the picture of ten baseball stars. Included are: Killerbrew, Jenkins, Aaron, Mays, and Banks. It also includes a few posters and autographs of the star depicted.

In the crowning achievement of the watch movement (a double pun!) is *101 Watch Jokes: Clock and Dagger* by Phil Hirsch and Paul Laikin. Coincidentally, the book is illustrated by Jack Sparling who is a former comic illustrator. The book is a rather motley collection of watch jokes. There is an occasional funny one, several bad ones, but mainly just a bunch of forced gags in bad taste. For example:

EX-LAX WATCH--an irregular movement, & some-
are private.
NASSER WATCH--it had a bum tick-er.
HOMOSEXUAL WATCH--only fits a limp wrist.
RAP BROWN WATCH--a black market special.
RAQUEL WELCH WATCH--it keeps bustin'.

Sometimes it just goes to show that not every fad brings pleasent things! In any event, the book is selling well, or marketed well. The book got good exposure in most of the department stores, and has shown up in a few jewelry stores. And just so you do not think it's all bad, there is:

GEORGE WALLACE WATCH--it's always running.
LLOYD BRIDGES WATCH--shark proof.
DAVID FRYE WATCH--an imitation watch.
CIA WATCH--clock and dagger.

No one can tell for sure how long this latest fad will continue, I'd be willing to bet it'll last at least until Timex markets a John Cameron Swayese watch. --- A. G. Host

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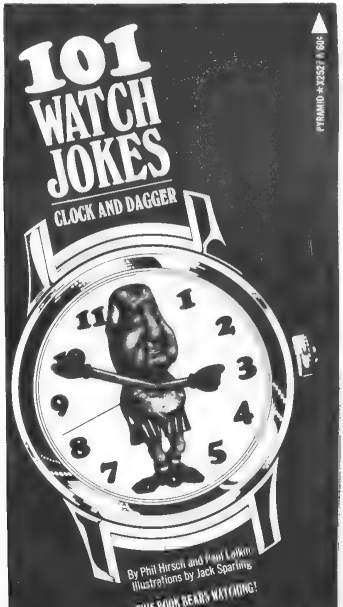

TERATOLOGY

BY MARK EVANIER

Mere words are inadequete to express the sentiment felt by most comic fans upon the debut of the Marvel Super-Hero cartoons. But their host here in Los Angeles made a notable endeavor when he would introduce them by saying: "And now, another one of those cartoons where nothing moves!" or "And now, another journey into the world of crud animation!" or, simply, "Another Marvel mediocrity!"

I can assure you, even at this late date, that those are verbatim quotes. Truth on TV is rare enough that it need be immortalized for posterity, if and when it occurs.

The host in question was comedy writer Gene Moss who, with his partner Jim Thurman, ran "Shrimpenstein." The duo had specialized in zany commercials prior to getting stuck at channel nine. And they had been responsible for the *Roger Ramjet* cartoons which, in some manner of perverted poetic justice, ran opposite "Shrimpenstein" on channel eleven. Moss portrayed Dr. Von Shtick, a Karloffian-voiced mad scientist, while Thurman manipulated the show's puppet population, as sordid a lot as you'll ever see.

They didn't last long--too good for the likes of channel nine where, now, the superstar is Regis Philbin. And, when last seen, Moss and Thurman had departed from the writing staffs of Bob Hope and Carol Burnett. It is quite a shame that they no longer appear on TV because, while they were on, it was a toss-up as to which was funnier: Moss and Thurman...or the Marvel Super-Hero cartoons. The difference was that Moss and Thurman are *supposed* to be funny.

There were thirty-nine three part stories of each of five Marvel Heroes: Captain America, Hulk, Thor, Iron Man and Sub-Mariner, for a total of 195 six-minute cartoons. Were all these to be spliced end-to-end, it would take 19 1/2 hours to view them all, provided your projector didn't commit *hari-kari* or that you didn't laugh yourself into helpless liquidity, first. Each episode was padded by the playing of a catchy, if inane, theme at both the opening and closing. All in all, in the 19 hours of super-hero adventures that the Grantray-Lawrence staff consigned unto film, there must have been a grand total of *ten minutes of animation!* That's more animation than was demonstrated by Ed Sullivan in twenty-one years of pointing at bear acts! In fact, that is more animation than was in all of the *Roger Ramjet* cartoons, so Dr. Von Shtick had no right to complain about the Marvel cartoons, however correct he may have been.

The economics, of course, have killed the animation business. In the thirties and forties, cartoons were made for movie theatres, not television, and the animators were paid around a fourth of what they were actually worth. Some marvelous work was produced then by these indentured animators but television and their well-deserved unionizing changed all that. The key now is to *think cheap!* The writers are instructed to write material not too difficult to animate and relying as much as possible on stock footing and existing drawings. Making the material entertaining is optional--because, what the hell, it's just there to segueway into the next Barbie commercial, anyway.

Limited animation, then, has become the new art form. It has cultivated its own devices and techniques and, it must be admitted, some very clever utilizations have taken place. Jay Ward spent considerable money and time having his cartoons as well-written and well-voiced as possible. Then, he had the animation done in Mexico by workers who could under-cut the low rates paid American animators. Hanna-Barbera, which has become the *pater familiae* (That's a fancy word that means "Big Cheese!") of the animation business, spews forth semi-moving pictures but is, reportedly, considering cutting costs even further by having their animation done elsewhere. As is, they must churn out a half hour of each of their many shows, every week --and these cartoons must be shown several times over, often, to break even. A profit, if any, will more likely come from the merchandising: toys, games, comic books, cereal premimums, extra-marital devices, models and the like. There *is* a lot of profit, but not for the animators.

Grantray-Lawrence, then, was trying hard to cut corners with the Marvel cartoons, especially important because these weren't even going on the web (network) but, rather, into syndication. They cut enough corners to build two freeway interchanges, four clover-leafs and an off-ramp. Voices and music, for example, came from Canada. Most stories and art were lifted from the comics and action scenes were usually reduced to a rapid succession of still shots, masked by intrusive sound effects.

The fact was that when the original drawings were done by Kirby, Ditko, Colan, Heck, Esposito and the rest, the artists had no i-

dea that their work would be animated on TV. Word balloons were eliminated and the drawings were transferred, via Xerography, to cels with, perhaps, an arm or a leg omitted so that it could be moved back and forth on a separate cel. The drawings weren't made to have this done to them.

Drawings were also "borrowed" back and forth from other cartoons using comics by other artists. Since Iron Man's armor changed considerably from issue to issue and since Hulk has never looked the same under any two artists, this produced some remarkable fluctuations. When Hulk would make a half-turn, he might start out in profile as drawn by Steve Ditko, turn quarter-left and pause on a Bill Everett drawing, then turn full-face and stare at us as a Bob Powell-Mike Esposito drawing done over Jack Kirby lay-outs. It looked like a very bad plastic surgery job. And it was difficult to get thirteen stories each out of the five characters' regular adventures...so issues of Avengers and, even the Fantastic Four were turned into Captain America or Sub-Mariner adventures. Several "original" Sub-Mariner adventures were also produced by having Doug Wildey, Sparky Moore and other Grantray staffers do sketches that could be utilized like the Marvel panels.

With their low budget, virtually all that the Marvel Super-Hero cartoons had going for them were reasonably good soundtracks, great story-lines where left intact and characters and drawing *not* rendered in the least-detailed style possible. When Grantray-Lawrence did the more-animated Spider Man series, the Web-Slinger lost many of his webs and looked somewhat anemic.

The shame, of course is that such fine stories had to be re-told in such a demolished fashion, not unlike watching Charles Nelson Reilly recite the soliloquoy from *Hamlet* or seeing Walter Cronkite dance the "Dying Swan." The latter might just be amusing enough to warrent the decimation of that famous ballet. But the former would cause the merits of Shakespeare to be seriously questioned and, in the immortal words of Moran & Mack, the Two Black Crows, "I wouldn't want to dig him up just for *that*."

The Hulk and his cohorts may not be on *that* level, I don't know, but they have had some very fine stories--though one would be hard-pressed to arrive at that conclusion from the cartoons in question. My own favorite, for reasons incomprehensible even to me, was Captain America's first encounter with the Red Skull's Sleepers. At least, I liked it until I heard Dr. Von Shtick introduce it by saying; "Captain America is still fighting Nazis today! Doesn't that stupid old man *ever* give up?"

It was, then, with some trepidation and, perhaps, even a little constipation, that we all tuned in on that Saturday morning when the Fantastic Four and Spider Man cartoons debuted on ABC-TV. I'm only telling you what we already know: There wasn't a *fanjack* among us, then, who hadn't abhored the 1st cartoons and who felt some loyalite compulsion to sample the new shows just to say you tried them--*once*.

If you're past nine, Saturday morning is an ungodly time to be awake. But, that first Saturday of the new cartoon season, we awoke and sluggishly stared at the alarm clock. Recognition of numerals is hard at that hour but we managed to determine that the Fantastic Four would be on in a few minutes. Being comic book fans, it was unfortunate that we hadn't overslept; we now had no excuse. We staggered over and flicked on the television and, as its tubes awoke, we tried to seperate the upper layer of eye-lashes from the lower and fully awaken.

The cyclops eye on the set blinked open. The sound rose, carrying the strains of a Johnny Lightning commercial we were destined to see nineteen times in the next hour. And it was almost time for the Thing to make his Television bow. It really shouldn't be *too bad*--It's by Hanna-Barbera and they're pretty good at cute mice obliterating sarcastic felines. Dr. Doom should be a cinch.

The F.F. appear--The drawing's simple but adequete. Voices are good--The Thing sounds exactly like a character on "Super Six", Invisible Girl sounds like JoAnne Pflug, mainly because her voice is supplied by JoAnne Pflug. There's no humor; dialogue is very simple, thus missing one of Marvel's most prominent commodities. A dozen commercials later, it's over. Not too bad, not the kind of thing we'll get up this early for again . Now, on to Spider Man--!

The Marvel hero who is most suited for TV is in the hands of Grantray-Lawrence. We recall that, in a newspaper interview, Lawrence kept referring to his new property as: "The Spider" and commenting that he was just like Batman. The theme song is rather lyrical, if only in comparison to the Fantastic Four's wordless sting of music. Hey, there's actually some animation in *these!* Even if it

is the same web-swinging clips repeated at two-minute intervals. Voices are weak but not bad. Again, no humor--something Spider-Man, especially on Saturday morning, needed. What humor is there is on a Saturday morning level--And Spider-Man's uniqueness in comics came originally from his having a sense of humor that transcended previous comic book standards and set new ones. They still have no intent or ability to capture in cartoons what made Marvel successful. Three more commercials for Johnny Lightning and, by the grace of God (who probably slept late, himself!) it's over. And the fall back into our beds would have broken any boards that might have been placed under our mattresses for support. And we needed support.

Later, at a fitting hour, we tune in for the first Superman-Aquaman hour (we never learn, do we?) and, by now, we don't care. Saturday mornings demonstrate mass-production at its massest. The Aquaman cartoons are worse than the Superman ones, if for no reason other than we could close our eyes on the Superman cartoon and imagine all the voices of Bud Collyer (Superman) and Jackson Beck (narrator) are part of the old Superman radio show. And, I assure you, that isn't much. Anyway, the Aquaman cartoons were narrated by Ted Knight, now the inarticulate newscaster on the Mary Tyler Moore Show. We finally come to two conclusions: 1) Comic book characters can really stink when they undergo the assembly line animation and, 2) We have got to stop watching TV on Saturday-mornings.

Actually, there's very little reason now for us to arouse ourselves so early on Saturday morning, unless it's to catch the Pink Panther, which isn't *that* good. The superheroes have vacated the premises--principally because they were getting bad press by, "breeding violence into our youth". But I'd like to think that a secondary and significant reason was the general poor quality of most of them. They didn't do as well as the funny animals which preceded them or as well as the Archie-surrogates which followed. And I rather think that it was due to the fact that they had very little story value, very simple characters and oversimplified graphic styles. These three failings, you'll note, were about the only failings *not* embodied by the Grantray-Lawrence Marvel Super Hero cartoons. And those Saturday morn shows could still be on if they had had old Doc Von Shtick there to denounce them.

Yep, you heard the man. . . Fandom Stranger is coming. A new 'zine with just the right combination of art, articles, and stories by both fans and pros to turn you on. . . and keep you turned on. Issue one is due out soon and is offset and wrap-around. Send now, as all advance orders will recieve a FREE bonus poster done by a top pro. Thanks!

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A Look at Maverick

BY GARY BROWN

In the mid 50's, Warner Brothers Studios began a television program entitled *Warner BrothersPresents*. It was comprised of three or four alternating shows, covering what might be considered the over-all formula of adventure. Because I was rather young at the time, some of the facts regarding the show have been forgotten or confused, but I believe it was an hour long show, with an occassional "historical" short used to fill any gap in the programming at the end.

My primary interest in the weekly series was the western portion, *Cheyenne*. I was somewhat bored with the private eye segment, never watched the part called *Casablanca* (featuring an occassional Hoagy Carmichael piano solo), and just didn't bother with the *King's Row* portion. When the show proved popular enough, Warner Brothers sold the *Cheyenne* portion as a weekly series to ABC. It was within the next few years that the viewing audience was totally submerged with Warner Brothers westerns and private eyes thrillers.

Cheyenne was followed by *Colt .45, Maverick, Lawman, Sugarfoot* (actually an offshoot of *Cheyenne*, created with Will Hutchins), *77Sunset Strip, Surfside Six, Hawaiian Eye, The Alaskans, The Roaring Twenties* and at least a half dozen others. Usually the Warner Brothers shows start off with an aerial shot of the studio, followed by a large WB symbol bursting on to the screen. Each program had a representative illustration, backing the show's titles and credits, with a very distinctive song, singing the praises of the hero or heroes.

During the first several years, each episode was ended with a preview of the next week's adventure. It gave viewers something to look forward to. Each program followed that particular pattern, and I became a devoted fan of just about every Warner Brother production.

There were some pretty big stars chisled out of these shows...Clint Walker went on to big things because of his *Cheyenne* role. Efrem Zimbalast Jr. and Roger Smith made their names on *77 Sunset Strip* (and, of course, Edd Kookie Byrnes was all the rage of the teen and pre-teen set, as well as the idol of every comb manufacturer in the country). Dorothy Provine developed a following in both *The Roaring Twenties* and *The Alaskans*. *Hawaiian Eye* didn't hurt Connie Stevens any, and lastly, James Garner made his mark as Bret Maverick in *Maverick*.

Of all the shows, *Maverick* was my favorite, and still rates (in my mind, anyway) as one of the best regular series to ever appear on television. While most of the Warner Brothers characters were seemingly molded around their stars, James Garner slowly became his character--Bret Maverick.

Maverick was a fanciful gambler, the sort of character parents don't want their children to associate with, who roamed the post Civil War West in search of a good poker game and the easy buck. One might say the Maverick brothers (brother Bart was played by Jack Kelly) were the forerunners of *Easy Rider* and the characters protrayed by Peter Fonda and Dennis Hoper. Maverick was basically an honest person, if not always with his brother or his weekly foe, then always with himself. He never cheated at cards, or rather: "I never cheat at cards because I'm never caught. You only cheat at cards when you get caught at it!"

Maverick was constantly being accused of cheating, but it usually turned out to be by the episode's bed guy or heavy.

Needless to say, when Dell Publishing Company brought out the first *Maverick* comic book in March or 1958, I was one happy fan.

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There was James Garner on the cover, photographed with a deck of cards in his hand. To the left was a blurb reading, "trouble was his trade...and he knew all the answers." This was to be the first of 18 issues of *Maverick*, with the last (Jan.-Mar. 1962) coming out several months after the series had been cancelled. Each issue had a publicity photograph in color for the cover, and every *Maverick* story was drawn by the talented pen of Dan Spiegle.

The first six issues were numbered, as most Dell one-shots and special issues are,

"Maverick had brilliant parodies of Bonanza & Gunsmoke..."

in the Dell-Four Color Comic series. The number one issue being #892. Actually the first four issues were on a somewhat quarterly schedule, but not until #980 (apr.-June, 1959) did the inside logo indicate that it was being published on a regular basis. With the seventh issue (Oct.-Dec., 1959), *Maverick* was given its own numbering sequence and went to being a bi-monthly book with number eight (Jan.-Feb., 1960). The book dropped to quarterly again a year later (Jan.-Mar. 1961) and stayed that way until the last issue.

The 1959-1960 television season was a peak in *Maverick's* popularity as a show, as well as a comic book. Most of the comic book adaptations were straight adventure/cowboy stories. The first story in the book was usually the longest and taken directly from a previous television episode (the first comic book adapted the first TV show, and so on). The shorter back-up stories and one-page fillers on the back covers, were non-adapted, original material. The entire book was made up of Maverick stories and typical Dell/Gold Key information pages, with Bret telling the readers about Indians or river boats, until the seventh issue, when Dell inserted both a one page text filler and a four page western story in the middle of the book. Whether it was used to comply with a postal regulation or to take some of the artistic load off of Dan Spiegle, is unknown to me. The new formula was followed until the end.

The stories and handling of the Mavericks in the comic book were usually along the lines of the straight Dell cowboy/western strip. The television show treated Maverick (notably, Bret while Garner played him) as an anti-hero. He fought only when he had to and this was usually when he was caught trying to sneak away. This non-violent attitude seemed to take place more and more as the series developed. In fact, the last year of the show, with Garner in the title role, had some brilliant parodies of *Gunsmoke* and *Bonanza*, mocking the traditional shoot em up western. The use of Maverick as a free, but cautious man, made him appear to be a coward in some instances. This, however, was always resolved by having the cowardly act as a decoy for his actual intentions.

Maverick would much rather sneak in the back door of a saloon and surprise his foe than busting in the front way and slugging it out. It saved on the wear and tear of his clothes and was so very much quieter. A favorite Maverick expression was, "Let's talk this over!" A John Wayne he was not.

The only real humorous situations in the Dell version (or *Authorized Editions* as they were called) could be found in the back up stories. Even these, however, treated the Mavericks as more of an "aw, gosh" good guy rather than the half-fox, half-snake he really was. The comic also did not utilize the cast of recurring characters that the television show had. Big Mike, a brute-like bodyguard was featured in the first issue, but otherwise, characters like Samantha Crawford, Pappy Maverick, Gentleman Jim Dandy, or Cousin Beau were never used, much less mentioned. The famed $1,000 bill the Mavericks pinned to the inside of their jackets was often used in the comic, but never with the reverence the *real* Mavericks held for it.

IT WAS ALL FAIR AN' SQUARE, BUT THE WAY I WAS WINNIN' YOU'D THINK I'D BEEN PLAYIN' ALL MY LIFE!
AND YOU MADE ENOUGH TO BUY THE STAGE LINE?

From Maverick 9. Art by Dan Spiegle.

Possibly the reason *Maverick* eventually failed was because of the limited number of plots which were utilized. The series was given many possible situations to work from, but the producers chose to hammer away at one or two basic plots. They chose to limit the number of situations the happy-go-lucky gambler could be involved in. The one thing the comic book and the television show did have in common was the basics of a Maverick plot. It usually involved an old man and his young daughter in some sort of trouble (it always was financial in some aspect), and one of them talking Bret or Bart into helping them. Their foes were mostly crooked big businessmen or political figures, with a

"Spiegle has been virtually ignored by historians and fans."

dozen thugs pulling the strings and beating on those who wouldn't jump on the bandwagon.

Like America, the series was preoccupied with money and how to make more of it.

The nice thing about *Maverick* was that it was essentially a non-violent cowboy show, and became more so as the series and characters developed. There was one episode where at least 500 rounds were fired in a shoot-out, but nary a soul was hit. It also tried to add a dash of realism into the traditional western mold. One episode featured Doc Holiday, the Earp brothers and the shooting match at the O.K. Corral. It showed all involved as human being rather than super-human gunmen. The realism was never meant to be accurate, but more or less tried to show just how phony the other western adventures were.

What did carry the Dell comic book version was the first-class art job turned out by Dan Spiegle. Spiegle is one of those stalwarts who has been in the comic business for many years, has influenced numerous other artists, and yet has been virtually ignored by historians and fan publications. Westerns have been Spiegle's forte for most of his career. His most famous work was done in the early 1950's on the syndicated *Hopalong Cassidy* strip for King Features. Later on he went to work for Dell/Gold Key (Western Printing Inc.) and has done work on such books as *Lawman, Maverick, Sea Hunt, Western Round-Up, The Hardy Boys* (both versions), *Spin and Marty, Lassie, Space Family Robinson, Casey Jones, Korak,* numerous Disney movie adaptations like *The Love Bug,* digest illustrations, Big Little Books and many, many others.

Spiegle stays quite busy, and since he is an extremely fast worker ("I'm their fastest artist," he says), they have a new script waiting at the completion of each book. It has been that way since 1956.

Spiegle's style is generally based on backgrounds, points of view and the use of blacks. Most of his complete backrounds are sketchy, but surprisingly detailed. These backgrounds along with properly placed black areas, balance his rather thin lined inking style to create a full and adhesive panel arrangement. Spiegle also knows how to use the point of view in a comic story to his advantage. Moving like a camera, he never gets caught telling a story from one static angle. He moves the eye about in a slow and careful manner, but not so drastic as to detract from the strip. In reading a Dan Spiegle illustrated story, one tends to realize that he is not trying to illustrate a script, as much as he is trying to make his pictures blend with the written words. It's the reason Spiegle is so good at movie adaptations. He is not overpowering the reader with more than he can absorb per panel. It is the easiest graphic story to read.

Another interesting facet of Spiegle's style is his knack for drawing for color. Many artists work in a basically black and white medium when they illustrate for comic books, and tend to dismiss the fact that color is going to be added to the finished product. Not so with Spiegle's work. His style varies from mood to mood, allowing color to play a key part in bringing the total story across.

CONTINUED

I HOPE YOU'RE ENJOYING YOURSELVES, GENTLEMEN! WAS THE FOOD TO YOUR LIKING?
BEST I'VE HAD SINCE...UH, SINCE TRAVELIN' ON THE CONTINENT!

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1960 MAVERICK STRIP BY DAN SPIEGLE. FROM ISSUE NUMBER 9

MAVERICK CONT

If you had to place Spiegle in a particular school of artists, I would say that Gil Kane, Steve Ditko and Russ Manning are the most pronounced in style and approach. Kane said he respected Spiegle as a professional artist in a fine style in an interview in in *Alter Ego #10:*

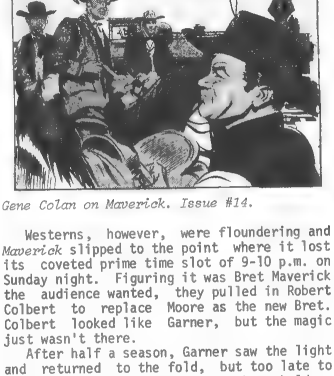
"...but his (Spiegle's)organizing of a picture is probably the finest demonstration I have ever seen of a guy dealing in spatial relationships. And on top of that, he can create a three dimensional scene; most artists in comics, since they don't understand formal techniques, tend to use the crop technique. They have something large in the foreground and a contrasting small shape in the background...But you can always tell when someone is trying, and most artists, play it safe, especially those regarded by the fans; because what fans like is a quality of design that is inherent in some aspect of the person's work and not the totality of his work."

Spiegle's work on *Maverick* bordered on being some of his finest. The first six and last five issues featured the best Spiegle inks on any of his Dell work. With Spiegle, the key is inking. How tight he inks his background figures and in-between objects is the strength of his style. Many of the middle issues of *Maverick* lack backgrounds, and were filled with blocks of color, obviously the product of narrow deadlines.

The best art work on the book appeared , in issue #945 (the third issue) in a story entitled, "Stage West." It was pure Spiegle and simply beautiful. Taken from an actual episode of the series, it was an excellent story and Spiegle's knack of exciting angles was never better. The story took place in a stagecoach resting place and featured the development of characters in a moment of stress. It is not easy to take a script with such limited action and movement, and develop a 25-page comic book story out of it. Spiegle handled it brilliantly.

The big part of *Maverick* and other Warner Brothers shows was the characterization the authors tried to inject in the lead stars. Each show was treated as a minature movie, with emphasis being placed on the star status. The main character had the most lines and was developed as the main attraction. While shows like *Gunsmoke* turned from emphasizing the popularity of one actor and stressed interesting, introspective scripts, the Warner Brothers Studios were chomping on their cigars at the success of their stable of stars. The studio tried to retain the old Hollywood star status, but it eventually wore thin on the television public.

James Garner was the star of *Maverick.* I never really cared for Jack Kelly's role as Bart, possibly because he was given the more serious roles and wasn't quite as sneaky as Bret. When Garner quit his job with Warner Brothers, Roger Moore was brought in as Beau Maverick, Beau was first featured in issue #15 of the comic book and was a second to Bart. Warner Brothers obviously felt that Kelly could carry the series by himself.


HELLO, MORGAN — JOHNSON! I SEE YOU BEAT US HERE!
SURE! WE WANT TO SELL OUR BEEF, TOO... BEFORE YOU GLUT THE MARKET WITH THOSE STEERS OF YOURS!

Gene Colan on Maverick. Issue #14.

Westerns, however, were floundering and *Maverick* slipped to the point where it lost its coveted prime time slot of 9-10 p.m. on Sunday night. Figuring it was Bret Maverick the audience wanted, they pulled in Robert Colbert to replace Moore as the new Bret. Colbert looked like Garner, but the magic just wasn't there.

After half a season, Garner saw the light and returned to the fold, but too late to help. The cowboy and Warner Brothers hold on the television market was fading. In 1962, *Maverick* was regulated to the re-run market.

It may be interesting to note that the last Dell issue of *Maverick* featured Robert Colbert on the cover as Bret, but Spiegle's inside interpretation was true to Garner's image.

Jim Garner played his way through several movies and is now featured in an outstanding television program, *Nichols.* Jack Kelly is making BP commericials, and Dan Spiegle has gone on to countless other assignments for Western. One of his more successful assignments came with *Space Family Robinsons* , lasting 39 issues. When asked how he felt when a title was cancelled, he replied, "Something new always comes along to take its place. That's the fun of comic books. You don't get stuck with the same characters for very long. I use to get awfully tired of drawing Hoppy and his horse!"

THE UNFANZINES

G. BERMAN & A. MALIN

Our first topic is *The Rocket's Blast*, and *TBG*. If you've been following our column and read Alan's advertisement in *CFM 4* you are probably aware of our statement and the reaction of Alan. When we wrote the article the *Buyer's Guide* was getting smaller, and our ads were not doing as well as expected. As of late, tho, page count is up but many dealers have somehow failed to take advantage of what *Buyer's Guide* has to offer. We are dealers ourselves and are constantly advertising. We're pleading with fellow dealer to place an ad in *The Buyer's Guide*. Ads are $16 a full page, and reach 3,500 people. And do us a favor. Keep a record of how many orders you receive from that ad. Then let us know. From our viewpoint, it would be totally stupid not to try advertising in *TBG* at least once. And, if your records prove it to be worthwhile, stick with it. That's your decision, but all Alan wants you to do is try it. We have been with both *The Buyer's Guide*, since it's beginning, and the *RBCC* since our beginning and both have their assets. Why not try both? We are keeping a record of sales and from which adzine they come from, and will be reporting on the percentage returns in future issues. It should be interesting.

Now, on to the second matter. Many people feel there is no honor or worth in putting out a prozine...that simply putting out the artwork you purchase and creating a professional looking magazine is a waste of effort and of money. Neal Pozner, a good friend of ours speaks, and speaks and speaks, about, this for hours on end. His *Wonderful World of Comix*, was the last of the *fan*-zines, but why has he ceased to publish? Because fandom will not support his effort. A prozine is a blessing because it allows the fans to view professional art, while not at a cheap cost, but at the highest quality. We, and others who publish near prozines, could sit back and publish another *Wonderful World* or what *Fantastic Fanzine* used to look like. But we don't, because we feel that glossy heavy paper, quality art and talk is the sign of professionalism. And frankly, that is what we are after. We do not feel that the price-tags on most of these type zines are to high. True, 32 pages for $2 is too high, but for 64, or 54 its not. Not if the quality is good. Neal states that you can buy a comic for 25¢ and see strips. True. But what of the printing quality, what of the color overlays, the trashy pulp paper. Are prozines worth it? Yes and sales prove it. People buy what they want, prozines sell better. At any convention, people look at a prozine with a color cover and proart before a fanzine. It may be sad, but its true. Because in a prozine they get what they want and they are willing to pay for it. Why is Groth and Wilson buying pro art and/or becoming more professional in their outlook. They want to improve sales. Nobody can honestly say that, fandom turns out better quality work then the pros who will work for pay from fans. A professional can also produce a simple fan magazine. Take *Squa Tront*. As far as money goes Jerry Weist was foolish, for he spent too much money on printing and ran into money trouble. But we respect what he has given to us, because it shows the work of the pros, and dammit, without that, there is no fandom at all.

Some people feel that it's a disgrace to pay for pro art. Okay, assuming a pro does art for free, what pays for the time he took doing it when he could have been doing a job for DC and Marvel and making at least a nominal salary. The pros in fandom who do give free art like Fantucchio, Richardson, Newton and so forth, all rely on other jobs to support themselves and all are probably flooded with work and contribute to a select few zines. From what I know, most of the other fan artists do not support themselves as of yet, so they do not have to worry about money. They will continue in fandom, only until they make it into prodom. And, only the best make it. We feel that professionals who do make their living from the artwork they do, should be paid for their quality work by the fans. To get to the other side of this story get:

The Creative Adventure #1: from Dave Kasakove 83 Irma Avenue, Port Washington, N.Y. 11050. We are all for a zine of this type, which, may come to take the place of the now defunct *WWOC*. I'm just afraid it may not sell well. The price is quite fair at 50¢, but as I mentioned before fan artwork will not sell copies. The art by Fujitake, Pozner, Janson, Cornell and others is nice, the best of non-professional fan work around. The interview with T. Casey Brennan is solid but it ends. Too soon. I wish it was longer, as it was going along pretty well. The most interesting feature of the issue is a transcript of a speech Gerard Geary gave attacking comix and Warrens at the 1971 Comic Convention. As I understand it he was yelled off the stage, but as editor Kasakove states his views present some ideas to think about. I hope Dave can keep this publication going, get it support it and you'll agree with me.

VIEW FROM CANADA

BY CLIFF LETOVSKY

This column will die a slow and painful death. How can I continue without enough information? I've written to a few people and have gotten no replies. I want to do this column. I may have enough information to fill two more columns. I need more help for this to survive.

Pipkin Papers is another Montreal produced 'comic book'. It's black and white, poor drawings, and totally done by one man. It's in English (surprise)!

A book is being planned in Canada on the Canadian Whites. It is entitled *The Great Canadian Comic Books*. Ordered immediately, it can be had for $12.95. After it's published, it will cost $15. It is all about the Canadian Whites and will probably be invaluable as a record of comics published in Canada. It should be interesting also, as the Canadian Whites started out to be a serious Canadian Art Form. Send to: Canadian Home Readers Service, Department J, 401 Bay St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Bill Payne, Ontario artist, does a really different cartoon for the Canadian papers. It's called *Learn to Ski with Al Raine*. Payne may be working with DC after he completes his current assignments, which include 52 sports cartoons, and completing the *Learn to Ski with Al Raine* strip.

Some Toronto news courtesy of Ron Kasman:

Captain George is a consultant on a future TV show produced by one of Canada's best but my information is not complete....Currently there is a Jim Jones exhibit at Memory Lane...Neal Adams and DC have promised displays....Ronn Sutton has published TELEPHONE POLE (with co-editor Bruce Kalnins). It is sent out free to fans whom they feel like sending it to...Toronto has some important developements going on with Skywald and Marvel. That is my complete information on this seemingly important Canadian item.

I was a bit hasty in my comments about *Canazine #2*. My opinion (expressed in CFM 1) is not valid as I had not seen the finished product. I will reserve judgment until it is published. It is available for 50¢ from 5252 Bordon, Montreal 265, Quebec, Canada.

Magazine Quebecois de Bande Dessinees #2 will hit the stands in mid-December. The staff of BD intended to go to Paris, France, to get tips from *Pilote*, and other magazines put out in France.

It happened in Canada is one of those one panel cartoons I mentioned in the column in CFM #1. It's drawn by Johnston and is about as good as any other cartoon in this fashion and ilk.

Cartoonist Profiles ($2.50 a copy from Jud Hurd, P.O. Box 325, Fairfield, Conn.). Issue ten contained an article on a pair of men in Nova Scotia who produced commercial comic work. Their names: Edmiston and Carnon. They have produced *Gulf Oil's Wayne and Shuster* strip. They attempt to inject a kind of story into the advertising pitch. An interesting article but has a misleading title "Canadian Comic World Today".

There are about 7 fanzines being planned in Quebec at the moment. Certain ones aren't finalized. Most have good material but may never show. *Blast*, a fanzine by Harland Ronning has reached my mailbox. Throughout the poorly produced fanzine (ditto on black masters, and lagging repro) there are "Support Canadian Fandom" plugs. Ronning's intentions seem honorable, but his book looks juvenile. There's little artwork, neither good or bad.

It seems that I've become District 6 organizer for the DCTC idealog campaign. This is a project to produce creative material in magazine form which is produced on schedules and distributed to fans in that district. They are trying to make this project nationwide and in a few years expand to an inter-national level. For furthur information you can write to:

David Esser
Box 389, Route 4
Wexford, Penn. 15090

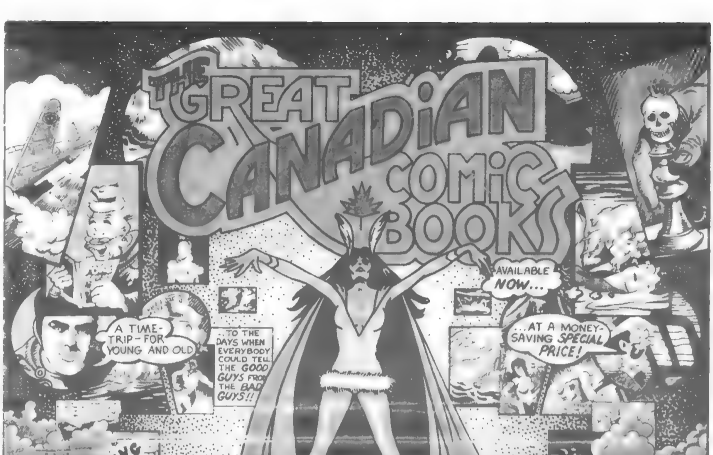
Edugraphics has already been done by the French. Under the name *Assimil Junior*, some French folks have put together an elaborate system involving comic strips and records. It is very successful. Advertisements have appeared on French television here, and the copy was quite long. It is especially long, considering it was put together in France.

Next time around, I'll let you in on everything going on in Quebec. You'll be surprised, shocked and elated. Quebec's plans are bigger now than when I first mentioned a change in climate.

If you want to see this column continued, mail in your comments, suggestions, news or anything else of interest. This can't continued without material. Please, write. My address is:

Cliff Letovsky
17 Holly Road, Hampstead 254,
Quebec, Montreal, Canada

I am most interested in hearing from any European fans reading this.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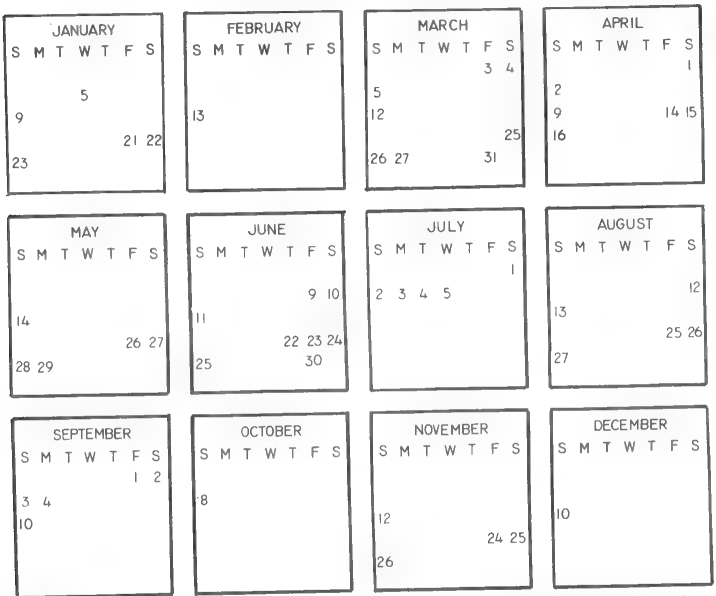
1972 FANAC CALENDAR



JANUARY

5--*Stan Lee at Carnegie Hall*
Carnegie Hall, New York City
Write: National Copaletic Ltd.
29 East 61st Street
New York City 10021

9--*Second Sunday*
Statler Hilton Hotel, New York City
Write: Phil Seuling
2883 West 12th Street
Brooklyn, New York, 11224

21-23--*Star Trek Con*
Statler Hilton Hotel, New York City
Write: Star Trek Con
PO BOX 95, Old Chelsea Sta.
New York, New York 10011

FEBRUARY

13--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th.

MARCH

3-5--*Canada Con*
Write: Tom Robe
V.W.O
594 Markham Street
Totonto Ontario Canada

13--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th.

25-27--*L.A. Con*
L.A. Hilton, Los Angeles
Write: Jerry O'Hara
14722 Lemoli Ave.
Gardenia, Calf., 92249

31--*Luna Con (Sci-Fi)*
See April 1,2

APRIL

1-2--*Luna Con (Sci-Fi)*
Statler-Hilton Hotel, New York City
Write: Devra Langsam
250 Crown Street
Brooklyn, New York 11225

9--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th.

14-16--*Easter Con*
Statler Hilton Hotel, New York City
Write: Adam Malin
16 East 2nd Street
Freeport, LI, New York 11520

MAY

14--*Second Sunday*
See Jan 9th.

26-29--*E.C. Fan Addicts Concention*
Hotel McAlpin, New York City
Write: Con Chairman
2623 Silver Court
E. Meadow New York 11554

JUNE

9-11--*PulpCon #1*
Colony Motor Hotel, St. Louis
Write: Con Chairman
BOX 15853
Overland Branch
St. Louis, Missouri 63114

11--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th.

22-25--*MultiCon (SouthwesternCon)*
Write: Robert Brown
1200 East Main, No. 21
Edmond, Okla., 73074

30--*New York Con (SeulingCon)*
See July 1-5.

JULY

1-5--*New York Con*
Statler Hilton Hotel, New York City
Write: Phil Seuling
2883 West 12th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11224

AUGUST

12-13--*Metro Con*
Write: Gary Groth
7263 Evanston Road
Springfield, Virginia 22150

25-27--*Deep South Con (sci-fi)*
Blackhawk Center, Atlanta
Write: Steve Hughes
1669 Clairmont Road
Decatur, Ga. 30053

13--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th

SEPTEMBER

1-4--*LA WORLD Con (sci-fi)*
Write: Fred Patten
11863 W. Jefferson, Blvd #1
Culver City, Calf., 90230

2-4--*NewCon*
Boston Sheraton Hotel, Boston
Write: Stan Darcy
PO BOX 3184
Brockton, Mass 02403

10--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th.

OCTOBER

8--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th

NOVEMBER

12--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th.

24-26--*Creation '72 (ThanksgivingCon)*
New Yorker Hotel, New York City
Write: Adam Malin
16 East 2 Street
FreePort, LI, NY, 11520

DECEMBER

10--*Second Sunday*
See January 9th.

SAN DIEGO CON: Date Unsettled, Site Unknown.
DETRIOT CON: Date and Site Not Available.

Corrections and additions accepted and printed in future issues of CFM.

SF AND FANTASY

BY JOE THOMASINO

Everyone loves a sequel right? Son of the BEM or anything else for that matter has always been a favorite of artists from the writers of Robin Hood and Zorro movies to Frank Herbert with *Dune Messiah*, E.E. Smith with the Lensman Series, Conan galore and all those Retief stories we've read. Phillip Jose Farmer, a very imaginative and ingenious writer, much in love with literary gimmicks uses a variant of this technique in *The Wind Whales of Ishmael*. Farmer comes on like a frustrated english literature instructor. His Riverworld series reveals him experimenting delightfully with great, real and imaginary characters from the past including Sam Clemens, John Plantagenet, Von Richtofen and many others. Unfortunately in Wind Whales he uses a different approach with far less satisfying results.

In Wind Whales Farmer confronts the reader with a sequel to that great work of american transcendental fiction, *Moby Dick*. We see the wandering hero, Ishmael, picked up from the wreck of the Pequod. From here on the story bears little resemblance to anything Melville meant, implied, intended or even dreamed of. Ishmael along with the rescuing ship is swept in to a time warp and winds up on Earth many thousands of years in the future when most of the seas have dried up, most of humankind is extinct and the most powerful beasts of the world ply the air rather than the sea. At this point the novel is revealed for exactly what it is, a gimmick story and a rather poor one at that. The gimmick here is the rather curious though remarkably unimaginative fish of the air and the culture of the humans left on Earth who hunt or alternately are hunted by the varied wind-blown creatures. We are treated to air-whales, air-sharks, air-plankton and a number of assorted BEMs, which seem intended to terrify even Gahan Wilson but wind up drawing nothing more than a yawn or perhaps a chuckle at their childishness. The flora and fauna of the land are nothing to sneer at either and include blood-sucking semi-sentient plants, but even these devices are sickeningly juvenile in conception.

The story-line, such as it is, is an old one. Stranger comes in to a society or environment, is nearly killed by it, masters it and because of his alien insight and personality solves a problem, becomes the ruler and then gets the girl. Farmer depends very heavily on the strange denizens of future Earth and fails miserably. The gimmick is inane, puerile and in some cases embarrassingly ridiculous. One can never forgive Mr. Farmer for putting the fascinating character of Ishmael in to this mish mosh and turning him in to a shabby well-worn version of any one of a dozen sci-fi heroes as deep as Lindsay's love for Rockefeller and as interesting as the *Farmer's Almanac*. Ishmael is totally misrepresented here and the picture we see of him in this new world resembles nothing, nor carries over anything, of Melville's beautiful development and description of the narrator of *Moby Dick*.

Farmer's clumsy attempts to parallel *Moby Dick* are painfully obvious and poorly done. One creature, The Purple Beast of the Stinging Death (even a four year old would puke upon hearing of this ludicrous contrivance) is obviously intended to be Ishmael's white whale but it doesn't come close. It appears that Mr. Farmer interpreted *Moby Dick* as simply a good tale about whaling which it most certainly is not , and thought he could grab two gimmicks at once. He could present whaling on a world where cetaceans are airborne and also use a well-known character and background to set the stage for this awful yarn. We cannot sell old Phillip Jose too far down the river though. One would think he also saw the inestimable lack of worth in this bomb and ended it as quickly as he could. It is a good thing this abortion is short, scarcely more than a novella, one seriously doubts whether one could stand the sound of Melville vomitting in his grave over a longer desecration of his beautiful masterpiece.

A writer who creates a sequal to his own work is taking a risk that he can make the transition smoothly, preserve the characters and backgrounds and come up with a well-done follow-up to his original creation. A writer who writes a sequel to someone else's work is taking an infinitely greater risk in doing it. One isn't sure if Farmer was being lazy in sequelling *Moby Dick* in this horrible gimmicky manner or was truly impressed by Melville and was taking up the challenge honestly of showing us Ishmael in a new setting. Either way he fails miserably and has done a disservice to himself, his readers, and most of all Melville who one can be reasonably sure never intended the tragic , studious and fated hero Ishmael to become the slayer of The Purple Beast of the Stinging Death. Farmer took a gamble and lost big

BY PAUL LEVITZ

Comic Economics 1972

Beginning with their October releases of *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* and *Adventure*, DC has been using recycled paper for their line of magazines. This is not only a step in the right direction from a social conciousness point of view but it's also a sound economic change. Recycled paper saves DC around $1000 per book done in this fashion. The only real quality decrease is a slight lightening of the cover stock (compare GL 86 and 87 and see).

Another profit making change DC has instituted involves their method of the binding. I am not quite sure how this works but it saves DC approximately $1000 per issue.

If the above sums seen insignificant in the realm of corporate sums of millions take a minute to figure out that National's just saved $2000 per book. They put out around a total of 350 books. That means $700,000 saving a year. Pure profit that didn't exist.

As most fans know circulation figures will be released from DC and Marvel in the January issues of their books. The item to pay attention to is "C", the average number of copies sold per issue. Do not worry about anything else (except maybe the returns item which is listed as office use, et al). This is the $64,000 item which gives comics their breath of life.

An interesting feeling that some editors have is that any book that can be sold once every two months can be sold every month. Makes you wonder why there aren't many more monthly magazines around.

I'm going to take some time out from pure economics to go into a little rebuttal to a batch of comments on Kinney's corporate attitude which appeared in *Newfangles* a while back (20¢ for their last issue from Don and Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor Ohio, 44060). Their sources reported that a rule's been issued at National forbidding a free-lancer from staying after 6:00PM and, complained that DC had taken to considering itself a high and mighty corporation et. al. I knew about the edict before so that when I read how it was being interpreted I decided to do a little investigative reporting. Fact of the whole matter: An evening, after all regular DC personel had left the office (or almost all), a mercifully unnamed person gave a grand tour of DC to some Marvel staff members. Another point is that most free lancers never show up at DC during any given week. And, even if they do it is rare that they'll stay late. Even if they do, though, they can *still* stay later. All they have to do is work on a job for a specific editor. So the edict isn't all that horrendous really. Just protective.

DC's moving again in 1972 to what used to be the Esso building in Rockefeller Center. Early reports indicate that the new quarters will be even more sumptuous than the floor and a half that NPP and Independent News Co. occupies at 909 Third Avenue.

Subscriptions strike me as a valid part of comic economics. For those of you who do not know it as of yet, DC has started offering subs to all their magazines at newsstand cost. They are only offering 12 issues subs since on shorter ones the bookkeeping cost is disproportionately high. These subs are mailed folded (as before) and they arrive about the same time as the book goes on to the stands.

Economically speaking I heard a dealer at Creation raving about Bob Overstreet's Price Guide to a friend of his. He was saying how it would make him thousands by telling him how much he can get for each book. Now at last a fan project that dealers like(with the notable exception of our old friend in Queens with the super-prices)! In any case, Bob's new edition is going to have 400 new cover repros and far greater listing of low-value issues. The ads will be strategically, placed throughout the issue on yellow paper. One other thing, the price has been raised to $6.00 this time around. It is scheduled for release in the spring. It is a great spot to advertise, if there is still room. Once you've subtracted the cost of the free copy you get with a full page ad it's pretty cheap too. Contact Bob for details, and at the same time send him corrections on the last edition.

SF AND FANTASY

if not on the stands then in the minds of his readers who will undoubtedly consider, this hackneyed trash to be if not the worst novel that they've ever read, certainly the worst they've ever seen from a writer with the great talents and potential of Phillip Jose Farmer.

The Wind Whales of Ishmael is Copyright C 1971 by Phillip Jose Farmer. Cover by Freas, published by Ace Books, New York.

WANDERING FAN

BY TONY ISABELLA

I don't write this column alone.

To be sure, it's Tony Isabella's opinions and ramblings you're struggling through, but every column I do for *Comic Fandom Monthly*--Brancatelli's answer to those who thought he was better off running numbers--has a pretty important collaborator. That backstage hero is *you*. Your letters go a long way in helping me decide what subjects to cover in this column and even what kind of column I should do. More often than not, when you write and ask my opinion on some development in comicdom, you'll see my comments on that selfsame development in a near-future column.

As CFM's sole *regular* reviewer of today's comics industry and products, I've got a responsibility to you that Joe's other regular columnists--talented though they have proven to be, he added hastily--don't have. To use newspaper jargon, this is my *beat* and if I'm not covering it to your expectations, you've got to tell me about it. I can't stress how important your letters are, so I'll just hit you with this request. Keep those cards and letters and anonymous donations of cash coming. A hundred dollars more and I can bribe my way out of this fannish disaster.

On Funky Flashman:

This first item might be considered proof of the statements I made above. I have been asked my opinion of *Mister Miracle #6*, which introduced Funky Flashman. As ye editor and, other close friends know, I hate like blazes to commit my comments on this issue to paper and, even less, to print. My comments could hurt some very dear friends of mine. Worse, they could be taken the wrong way and I want to remain neutral on the issues behind Funky Flashman. However, I have been asked for my feelings on this book and, as per our agreement, here's my personal statement...

No matter what his personal arguments and grievances with Stan Lee--and I am not about to judge their legitimacy or illegitimacy as I am not in possession of the complete facts in the matter--I do not think Jack Kirby, or any editor, has a right to utilize an entertainment product (*Mister Miracle*) as a forum to attack a former employer. Speaking as an individual paying customer, I do not like to see my twenty-five cents used thus. I think Jack's constant playing on Funky Flashman as played by Stan Lee was a deterrent to *Mister Miracle #6* from an artistic standpoint and a petty attack in its own right. I hope, as a long time fan of all parties concerned, that Stan Lee and Roy Thomas do not intend to respond with a similar attack. It would serve no purpose and would only further discourage those of us who feel that the members of the comix industry have become increasingly petty in their dealings with one another and in their dealings with their fans.

On The Marvel Comics Group:

Marvel has the look of a company prepared to move forward with a vengeance. I've been disappointed in most of Marvel's books for a year or so, but always hoped they would once again gain the quality synonymous with their products. These past few weeks have brought news of some exciting new books in 1972. I don't know if Marvel is ready to release any information on these books yet, so I'll pass over them this time around. But, we can and will comment on the current titles we liked. Or disliked.

The Avengers #97 ("Godhood's End!") is an excellent conclusion to the Kree-Skrull war. I reread this 9-issue serial and it holds up remarkably well, even through the quicksand-clear period when the magazine went from 32 to 48 pages and back again. The non-destiny of the Kree and Skrull races was a masterful resolution of the conflict. The use of Rick Jones as the crux in this revelation was apt payment for this character's many years with Marvel. What better choice to represent the next step of Man's evolution than the youngster who must have felt inferior next to the Avengers and Captain Marfel? The sacrifices of Mar-vell and Clint Barton--the latter was underplayed brilliantly--just added frosting to an already superb confection. This title just could prove to be the dark horse of the 1971 Goethe Awards results.

Daredevil #85 ("Night Flight!") is easily Gerry Conway's best story for Marvel. Gerry got himself out of the tangled web of issues #77-84--the Mr. Kline tales--by presenting a straight-forward adventure story with a modern theme and interesting characters. Gerry is still too wordy in places, but he's meshing personal problems with physical conflict better than he ever has before. And Taggart is one of the better supporting players that I've seen in recent years. If Gerry doesn't yield to the temptation to use him regularly in the book, he's created himself a good ace up his typewriter. Negatively, Gene Colan's art isn't up to par this issue. I'd like to see a new artist on *Daredevil*--the one issue

"'Tomb of Dracula' shows promise, in spite of shortcomings."

that Alan Weiss did (#83) comes to mind--and a new strip for Gentleman Gene. Take a look at his Marvel work of the late 50's. I suspect Colan could handle any strip anybody in comicdom could come up with.

Fantastic Four #119 ("Three Stood Together!") and *Marvel Premiere #1* ("And Men Shall Call Him...Warlock!") are two more proofs of Roy Thomas' immense talents. The first tale is the best treatment of T'Challa, the Human Torch, and the Thing since Jack Kirby's days on the book. Roy took a difficult theme and handled it well, without letting the theme's relevance interfere with the story and still giving it the attention it deserved.

In *Marvel Premiere #1*, Roy brought back a trio of characters from the past, fulfilling a good deal of the potential inherent in the players from their introductions.. The birth of the New World, the painful growth of evil on its innocent surface, and the second coming of Him made for a frightening classic of science-fiction, comics-style. My only complaint is the book's quarterly schedule; but if any book deserves the wait, Warlock does. Roy's going for the 1972 Goethe already. He may just get it.

Marvel quality appeared in some unexpected places, too. *Rawhide Kid #96* presented a fine western, "The Kid from Missouri". Gary Friedrich turned in a tale every bit as good as the ones he did for *Butch Cassidy*. If he were also given the eight pages used for usually poor reprints, Gary might make Rawhide Kid the best western around. Dick Ayers did one of his better penciling jobs, with added enjoyment coming from Bill Everett's inking. Watch this book these next were months.

Tomb of Dracula #1 also shows promise, in spite of some crucial shortcomings. The return of Bram Stoker's vampire is commendable in that it sets up a rationale for the tales to come. Gerry Conway's wordiness does work in this particular mag, but those times when it doesn't cause me to wince. The artwork's another problem. When Gene Colan inks something he's pencilled, the result is much too sketchy. I would like to see Tom Palmer doing the inking here. Again, this is a title to watch in months to come.

Other surprises were the new yarn printed in *Monsters on the Prowl #15* ("Terror of the Pterodactyl!") & the all-new *Our Love Story #16*. The Pterodactyl story suffers from it's mere seven-page length, but *Our Love Story's* "Alone in the Dark" is a good tale with "One Fleeting Moment" also standing out as a better than average romance story. "Alone" also boasts some refreshingly crisp pencilling by Alan Weiss.

Unfortunately, Marvel must also take this month's BUMMER OF THE MONTH "award" for *Iron Man #45* and its utterly tasteless use of the "Long Island Four". The tragedy that struck Kent State University can't be understood in insensitive stories that place the Guardsmen and the students in roles completely different from the roles wither of them were found in on that fateful May afternoon.

Moving on, the new Gil Kane covers on the reprints are quite good, especially the western covers inked by John Severin. With Red Wolf a success, Marvel should consider a few new issues of other westerns. *The Ringo Kid* is a possibility. With its sub-plot of western prejudice--Ringo's father was ruined by his marriage to an Indian--and the dark mein of Ringo himself, the book could capture the audiences of both the Gunhawk strip and DC's *Son of Tomahawk*. *Two-Gun Kid*, with a Kirby-esque approach and more emphasis on a masked hero theme, could get the Red Wolf fans plus a few strays from the super-hero books. I'm not, of course, in a position to do anything more than speculate on the sales feasibility of these books. Any comments, Roy?

On DC:

One of the advantages in producing titles radically different from one another is, obviously enough, variety. DC does not always make good use of this variety. Whole genres of titles receive the worst writers, writing their worst scripts. That's why I'm glad to see some good stories in some otherwise poor mags. *House of Mystery #198* features a very good Archie Goodwin tale with some good Mike Sekowsky art, "THE DAY OF THE DEMON." As if to counter, *Weird War Tales #3* has a yarn by Len Wein and Marv Wolfman, "The Pool," drawn by Russ Heath and equally good. If you must have one-story books, these are the stories. Both recommended.

Of course, we shouldn't neglect the books that offer *two* good stories. Len Wein has a great story in *The Phantom Stranger #17*. It is followed by an equally good reprint story of Dr. Thirteen. Len's story, "Like a Ghost From the Ashes," reveals a little bit of The Phantom Stranger's past, making him more human and more mysterious. Now that we know a little, we want to know a lot. A below-the-belt tactic, Len, but great. As for the Dr. Thirteen tale, "Suicide Tower," it's the Doc

"Romance books, even when terrible, are a bundle of fun..."

as I like to see him. Not the raving maniac of the Bob Kanigher issues, but the thinking man, the dedicated superstition beater. *The Phantom Stranger* is one of DC's best. It is most highly recommended.

Speaking of Bob Kanigher, whose stories I have often panned in this column, he hit the stands this month with two good stories. If he's good, he's very good. *Lois Lane #118's* "Edge of Darkness" is the best Lois story he has ever done. The appearance of the second Morgan Edge comes as no surprise--why Nelson Bridwell felt he had to print the secret all over the Superman family magazines & muffle impact I'll never know--but the heroic character of the real Edge does. Kanigher's set up a great conflict here and I hope he keeps the tension building. More is promised next issue. Worth looking into.

The second Kanigher triumph, *Son of Tomahawk #138's* "Christmas," came as no surprise either. This is Kanigher's book. The man's got a feeling for this series, for the restless spirits of both Tomahawk and his eldest son, for Moon Fawn's gentle wisdom, even for Small Eagle's pride in his heritage. *Son of Tomahawk* is one of DC's best. I see it discontinued with the same regret I greeted Bat Lash's disappearance from the stands. We're losing a good one, friends.

When Kanigher's good, he's good. When he is bad, oy vay! "Death Picks a Loser" is an almost indescribably bad story, even for *Our Fighting Forces #135. (hey, Evanier! Didja notice how I did that? Worked the ish number into that sentence with finese, I should say. Whoops! Sorry, Joe! It's been a long day, it has!)* Capt. Storm is a good character and deserves a better death than the one he's given here. The story doesn't flow, it jumps. As if Kanigher had never heard of an interesting little tactic called pacing. If he's got a soft spot in his heart, Bob Kaniger will have to bring Capt. Storm back--his body was never found--at least to do the job right. Not recommended.

If you're in the mood for laughs, pick up *Young Love #91* for the advice column, Marc--on the Man's Side. Would you believe it? A mod Don Rickles? He answers questions about dating with answers like "you're fortunate a man is giving you, *a mere girl*, a little attention" when a writer asks how she can discourage "a repulsive-looking, crippled football player." No doubt the masochists among the readership will love Marc. He's quite a bit more interesting than the text page from *Young Romance #178*. Are you ready for this? "Diet Secrets of the Hollywood Stars", which asks...Are the beauties you see on TV and in the movies naturally slim? And a CFM reader asked me why I read the romance books! Even when they're terrible--which they frequently are--they're a bundle of fun.

On Fanzines:

Though I seldom intrude on other writer's beats, I like to use this space to debate an important point with CFM's zine review team, Adam Malin and Gary Berman. In their column for issue #4, they made a statement that the zines reviewed in issue #1--Minotaur, Realm, and other BPP zines--*were not representative of fan publishing today.* To which I can but reply-in a family magazine--*baldersdash!*

What is representative of fan publishing? Expensive art zines that feature no fans and only pros of a certain type--known as, without lessening the talent of the man they all imitate, the Frazetta Fetishers? Where does that leave the Roy Thomases and Len Weins of fanzines past and the Mike Barriers and Alan Hanleys of today, to name only a few of many fanzine talents that do not fit into the restricted artzine format.

The artzines have their place in fandom's ranks. I won't debate that. But, they just aren't all fandom has to offer. They aren't even the best fandom has to offer.

We have excellent news and review zines--*Comic Comments, Etcetera,* and Richard Kyle's *Graphic Story World.* We have *Comic Crusader* and *Fantastic Fanzine* and other good article zines. We have Rudy Franke's stripzine, the zine that introduced Richard Corben, the always entertaining *Voice of Comicdom. Funnyworld* and *Graphic Story Magazine* top all the artzines. Fan satire thrives in the almost-totally Dwight Decker written zine, *True Fan Adventure Theater. Minotaur* and the rest of the BPP zines offer a wide range of printing methods and material styles. And what about this zine, *Comic Fandom Monthly?*

If you're going to be selective--and we do not think you intend to be--I think some writer with a more open mind should be doing fanzine reviews for this zine. I yield this floor to Adam and Fary for any comments they wish to make next issue.

Just enough room left for me to extend to all *Comic Fandom Monthly* readers and all CFM staff members a Merry Christmas and the best New Year imaginable. See ya.

OK, THE EDITOR'S UGLY, BUT WE ARE NOT SELLING HIM...YET!

What does it take to survive in comic book fandom? Well, start with a smattering of Tony Isabella's WANDERING FAN, a little of Mark Evanier's TERATOLOGY, a dash of BEARD MUTTERINGS by Norman Masters, a pinch of Mike Rawb & APA-WATCH, a half-pound of Cliff Letovsky's VIEW FROM CANADA, a SOUNDING BOARD by Stan Clish, some SCI-FI AND FANTASY by Joe Thomasino, a little JACH SPAKE by Jeff Wasserman some dashes of Adam Malin, Bob Pinaha, Wally Stoelting, Gary Berman, Art Miller and Gary Brown, give it to Joe Brancatelli and "Jakey" Jenkins to edit, and serve it on a monthly basis, and you have got COMIC FANDOM MONTHLY. Every month CFM brings you fandom's best writers in large in-depth doses and gives you some needed relief from art-zine headache. Get fandom's only monthly article zine, CFM.

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PART 2 BY STAN CLISH

A CFM SPECIAL

In the first play against strong George-Town, Jim sped forty yards for a TD.

Against Pittsburg, Jim tormented the defense by warning them where he was going.

"Next play, off right tackle," Jim shouted as the teams came to the scrimmage line. He invited Pitt to stop him all that Sunday afternoon. They could not. Carlisle 17, Pitt nothing.

Against unbeaten Lafayette no kick by Jim Thorpe was less than 70 yards. He also scored two touchdowns and a 75 yard field-goal. Carlisle 19, Lafayette nothing.

Jim was hobbled by an injury against the powerful Penn. He could only set up two touchdowns, score another and stop the Penn attack almost by himself. Remember in those days there was no platooning. Twenty two players went in for the opening kickoff and most never left until the final whistle blew or they had been rendered *hors de combat*. Carlisle 16, The Quakers nothing.

Harvard was the reigning champion of college football and had been for years. Pop Warner brought his 16 man squad to Cambridge to face Harvard's forty-five man juggernaut team. Harvard had a proud football tradition for it was here that American football was truly invented. There's a pleasent bit of fiction that the first football game was played between Rutgers and Nassau Hall (now called Princeton) in 1869. In this contest there was no scrimmage and the ball could only be advanced by dribbling with the feet or butting it with your body. No hands, please. It was, of course, association football (soccer). The term "soccer" comes from the association football abbreviation of "assoc."

Harvard in the mid-1870's synthesized, rugby and soccor and came up with football (the Boston game) as we now know it.But back to the Cambridge grandstand and the year of 1911.

Jim kicked a 23 yard field goal, a 45 yarder and a 37 yard effort. But the Cantabs led in the fourth quarter, 15-9. "Gimme the ball", growled the warrior.

Jim carried the ball nine straight times. On the ninth play he stormed through the best defense in the nation for 17 yards and a touchdown. But the Sac and Fox warrior did not settle for a close game with Harvard. He wanted more.

"You set the ball up. I'll kick a field thundered Big Jim.

"Sixty-five yards?" asked Welsh, the quarterback.

"Sixty-five yards".

The halfback's kick rocketed easily over the goal posts. Carlisle 18 Harvard 15. Jim Thorpe had scored Carlisle's every point.

As Percy Haughton put it, "Here was the theoretical super player in flesh, and blood!"

Then Jim joined the American team for the 1912 Olympics held in Stockholm.

The supreme event in the Olympics is an decathlon---a ten event competition which includes sprint, intermediate and distance running plus most of the field events. The praises heaped upon recent winners such as Bob Mathis, Rafer Johnson and Bill Toomey, still ring in our collective ears. Well, Jim Thorpe won the decathelon with unbelievable ease and set a world record.

Then there's the Pentathlon, 5 events including riflery, horsemanship, boxing and obstacle courses. Thorpe won it in a breeze and set a world record. The second place finisher, Guirot of France was 457 points behind. No one has ever done as much as make a showing in both events.

The 1912 football season found Thorpe a marked man. Each team massed their defenses against him. He received four and five man coverage.

Yet, he was so much more devastating. He slashed through the defense for 25 touchdowns, threw 17 scoring passes, scored 198 points and averaged *187* yards a game on the ground. No one has ever come close.187 yards a game is equivalent to a contemporary pro running for 2,632 yards in a season! And Jim enjoyed the defense the most!

Against Army, the starting right halfback was so thoroughly demolished by a Thorpe tackle, his football career ended then and there. He carried that encounter the rest of his life. Don't worry, though about the man. The Army back managed to make a name for himself. He was Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Thorpe blocked, tackled, kicked, passed and ran with a vengeance. Carlisle was supreme.

Now the A.A.U. was informed that Jim had accepted token amounts of money for the fun of playing summer baseball, a common practice of college athletics

They demanded his trophies returned and his name removed from the list of Olympic champions.

JIM THORPE, con't.

Jim was genuinely hurt but complied. He couldn't understand why he was singled out.

THORPE'S PRO YEARS

Pro football was born in the coal fields of western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio in the 1880's. After having worked a strenuous 96 hours, 6 day week, the miners largely--Irish or Eastern European extraction would--have at it on a fall Sunday afternoon. Then the hat would be passed. Lawson Fiscus, was the first to admit to a $20 paycheck.

Since then the pro football game was on and off at Massillon, Canton, Latrobe or Greensburg, or Pittsburg, Philadelpia, and other towns in the football belt.

In 1915, after a ten year lapse, Canton, Ohio wished to revive the pro game. And what better way to insure it's success than hire Jim Thorpe.

Canton and Massillon have one of the great sports rivalries in this land. Their high school teams attract (recruit?) the finest footballers and are ranked among the top high school teams in the nation. They could whip some of the smaller colleges. When these two powerhouses collide it's new Year's eve, the second coming and the Battle of the Bulge all wrapped up into one.

So it was...in 1916 Jim Thorpe made every tackle. Massillon's immortal passing battery of Knute Rockne to Gus Dorias didn't complete one pass due to Jim's destructive defensive maneuvers. Canton won 28-0. The smiling Brave had scored every point.

Jim after 1921 went on to other teams, following the money and founding his own aggregations. With Thorpe playing any team was a guarenteed stadium filler. He tore up the opposition for the Oolang Indians, Rockland, Portsmouth, Hammond, Cleveland, the New York Giants and Chicago Cardinals.

He finished with the Cardinals in 1930 at the age of 41.

Now you're saying sure he was the world's greatest athlete but could he compare with The Guardian, Batman or Captain America in cleverness.

There are many examples but let's mention one that intrigues me.

One Sunday, Canton took to the field with only six hearty backfield men. An enemy, a tackle 6' 3", 240 lbs. Extrordinarily big for the time. He began a program of crippling the remaining bulldog backs with some cheap shots.

Viciously and deliberately he went about his work and two backs were carried off the field.

JIM THORPE

Something had to be done to stop this wanton slaughter. Big Jim was on the sidelines coaching with a mangled leg that barely allowed him to walk.

He put himself in when Canton was forced to punt.

The Sac and Fox in the huddle told his linemen to let the tackle in. His troops were wide-eyed. Schneckel, a tackle, thought that Thorpe had gone over the edge. But that Bulldog complied.

As the ball was snapped the massive nemesis roared in. Now he would collapse Thorpe like an accordian.

With the rushing tackle a few yards in front of him, the big Indian lazily threw the ball at him. The bemused monster caught the *gift*.

Thorpe hit him wiht a clean but shattering tackle. It was as if the grandstands had fallen in on the over-sized defenseman. They carried the poor man off the field and called for the ambulance.

Jim Thorpe died in 1953 at age 65.

Of him what more can we say? The king of Sweden spoke for all when at the conclusion of the 1912 Olympics he greeted Jim Thorpe and said, "You, sir, are the greatest athlete in the world."

He was then. He is now. The only authentic superhero who ever lived.

LETTERS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Despite all our determined efforts, we cannot possibly print, or answer personally every letter received. Rest assured, however, that they are all read by both Editor and Associate Editor. We appreciate and encourage your interest. Write to:
CFM LETTERS
2016 East 23rd Street
Brooklyn, New York, 11229 --Joe Brancatelli

LIGHT NOTES...

I'd just like to comment on Jeff Wasserman's *Jack Spake* column now, about the *Etc-tera* story.

Actually, Levitz sent me the thing to be printed without warning me it was coming, about the time of *TBG #6* (taking prices from *TBG #1!*). The printer for that had gone out of business, so I was forced to take it to my current,much higher printer. Paul expected it to be printed *overnight* as per the old ad, when I told him it would not be--this printer takes a week to ten days, and does not like doing small 250 copy jobs. After convincing my printer to do them, and then mailing them out to Paul, I get a letter from him saying he stopped payment on his last $12 dollar check because it's taking too long. Now here I am with a big printing bill,losing $12 on the deal,and he has the copies and the $12.(he paid $36 before & I will not refund, of course). He owes me me the $12.00, not I owing him any $50! He certainly isn't going to be taking it out in ads in *The Buyer's Guide* (Wasserman's article was the first I heard of it myself, and I certainly won't go along with it.)

It is because of this mess Levitz caused me that I'm not doing anymore fanzine printing. I'm only giving prices of a company out of New York, but no more messing around with my printer only to lose money.

And despite the fact that there was two, upsetting items in CFM #3, I really did enjoy it. --Alan Light, Editor, Buyer's Guide.

THE EDITOR REPLIES

As far as Wasserman's info came from, it was straight from Levitz, and whether or not he let you know what he was planning to ask is not CFM's fault. We only printed what Levitz said he was going to do. Whether or not he went through with it is a moot point. In any case, we understand all is now lovey-dovey between Paul and Alan.

There is one thing that does bother this editor, however. You mention that you arent in the business of fanzine magazine printing to lose money. We can't blame you in that desire. Who wants to lose money on anything?

You continue to state that you are now quoting prices of a New York firm. What you fail to tell our readers is that you are giving the prices of INTERSTATE PRINTERS, who's ad appears in this magazine. He does the printing of COMIC FANDOM MONTHLY, ETCETERA, COMIC CRUSADER, JOURNEY INTO COMICS, and at least 4 other fanzines whose name slip my mind. What you also fail to tell your readers is that your price quotes for his work are anywhere from $20 to 70 higher too. Are we supposed to give you $70 just to be a middle man? No one wants you losing money, Alan, and personally I hope you make money, lots of it. But NOT on printing.What gives you the right to make money this way? You continue to advertise TBG as absolutely necessary for comic fandom. Fandom has done nicely for a decade without TBG and will do nicely should it fold tommorow.I can see you making money (in fact I hope you do) on TBG, but not as a middle man, especially today when printing costs run so very, very high. You're hurting fandom, Alan. Had you really wanted to help it, you would have made the recommendation without jacking the prices higher.

Fanzines are done on a limited basis money-wise, and no one needs someone who paes himself off as saviour and bleeds you dry as a middleman. Comic fandom has been pretty honest over the years and crap like your pulling is detrimental and a stifling, murderous factor.

And if you readers out there are thinking of producing a fanzine, WE HIGHLY!! recommend INTERSTATE PRINTING. He is one of the few gentlemen in the printing business and is most accomodating. His advantage over other printers is his low prices.. Try him. Write for catalog at:

INTERSTATE PRINTERS
1574 39th STREET
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, 11218.

Compare his prices to the inflated ones that Alan is charging for acting as the middleman for a printer. It's the same guy, only Mr. A Light thinks this is a legitimate way of some money. Makes you wonder who's helping and who's hurting fandom! Joe Brancatelli, Ed.

ABOUT CFM...

I have just finished reading CFM and now find it necessary to comment on several things, the first being Roy Thomas' letter. First off let me state that I think Roy Thomas is at present the best comic writer in the industry. His recent 9-part *Avengers*

LETTERS

which shall be concluded next month is the most original and exicting masterpiece to grace the pages of a comic. And despite his feeling of isolation from fandom, I feel he brought up several good points. The first issue of CFM struck me as a pile of slanderings and destructive criticisms (fortunately the #3 issue was nothing like the first). I'm sure this wasn't your purpose but several of your columnists seemed to feel that they were the pros and the comic industry the amateurs.

Of course Roy was guilty of some of the same things he accused you of. Jack Kirby contributed more to Marvel than anyone else except Stan Lee, and certainly a lot more than Roy has of yet. And if Tony Isabella happens to enjoy Kirby's stuff more than anyone else's, there's no reason for sarcasm. After all it's no more farout than a war between the Kree and Skrull galaxies fighting over the MUDBALL EARTH, and intergalactic shipping lanes.

My next comments are on the changes to take place in CFM. I'm glad to see Bob Pinaha's COMIC PODIUM disappear as it seems he only reviews comics which most of us have already read over a month ago and that he only tells us things we already know. Also he strongly shows us how pro-D.C. he is by reviewing one Marvel a month as contrasted to ten D.C.'s.

The continuing of WANDERING FAN & THE SOUNDING BOARD is also a good note as well as JAKE SPAKE and BEARD MUTTERINGS (especially BM, as I find Norman Masters to be the fairest and most level-headed columnists you have). Also a note for Jeff Wasserman on his latest JACH SPAKE : not that I enjoy MAD any more than Marvel or National, but don't be so quick to put it down.While most true comic books seem to be doing well among the pre teens and recently flourishing at colleges , only MAD is supported by high school student agers as a whole. It's accepted by all the students, not just comic freaks. And considering that freaks constitute a very large buying group, I suggest you take a lesson from this *poor conception of humor*.

Miscellaneous comments include that I'd like to see more writing on new material, a few more letters from readers, that I find a smaller print an improvement if it allows more pages at a constant cost, and that I'd like to wish you luck on your new format.

--Bill Abeles

Right: Lt. Blueberry from Pilote

You won't get any arguement about Roy Thomas being a great writer. What else is new? I shy from naming anyone the GREATEST, as that's all quite subjective, and dependent on the criterium you use. For my money I'd take Thomas, O'Neil, Ditko and Wein before anyone. But that's just opinion.

Your statement that BoB Pinaha is pro-DC is ridiculous. Any true comic reader doesn't have a favorite company. They take quality , and take it from anywhere it comes from.

And lest you forget, Roy Thomas is not as isolated from fandom as you think. He still, though slowly, edits and publishes ALTEREGO, which is fandom's first and still the best.

--Joe Brancatelli.

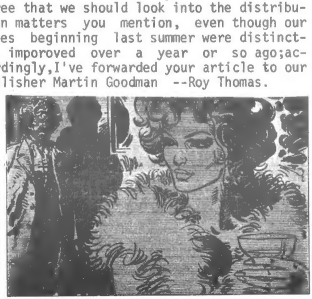
I'd like to say you have put together a great magazine, and it is a tribute to comic fandom, and is well-worth 50¢. I'd also like to say Roy Krenkel's style has changed. Drastically! Granted, it is still great but the old HUGO winner has done better stuff.

--Joe M. Farara

And wouldn't we all love to produce a Mona Lisa every time out. --Joe Brancatelli

I dig the smaller size (as well as increased page count). Just makes me all the sadder that delay after delay has plagued *Alter Ego*, though one of these days...one of these days...

In keeping with my new policy of keeping generally out of altercations with fans (since I respect their intentions if not always their viewpoints) I will simply mention two things in connection with the columns in 4. First, I'm glad *Asterix* is getting coverage in *CFM* and *GSW* lately; now how about some on *Lt. Blueberry*, another fine story telling strip in *Pilote*. Second, a thanks to Bob Pinaha for info on DC Survey Club. Yes, Bob, I agree that we should look into the distribution matters you mention, even though our sales beginning last summer were distinctly imporoved over a year or so ago;accordingly,I've forwarded your article to our publisher Martin Goodman --Roy Thomas.



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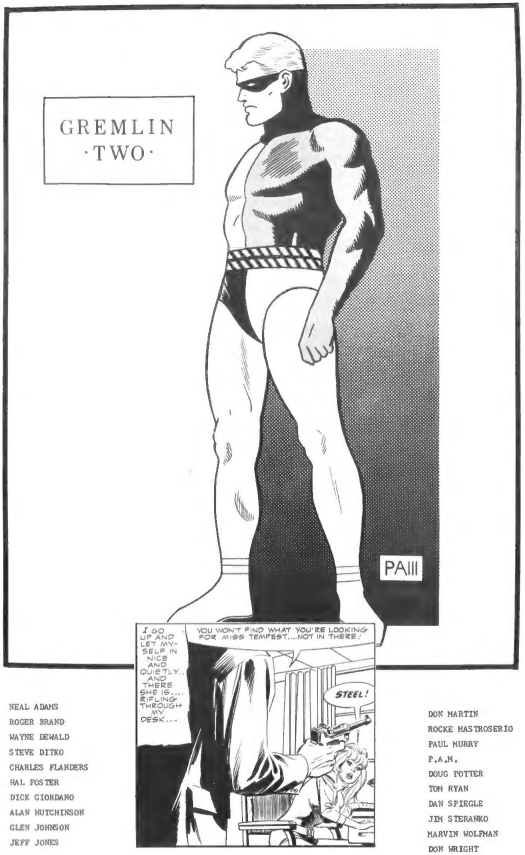
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